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Chairman: Mr. RANA (Nepal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 66 AND 155 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. HOLGER (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on being unanimously elected Chairman of the First Committee. I also congratulate the other officers of the Committee on their election.

Your experience and diplomatic skill, Mr. Chairman, guarantee that we shall do fruitful work in this new era in international relations that is now beginning. I also pay tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Adolfo Taylhardat, for the excellent work he did in support of disarmament and international security.

History is a long process, and time for reflection is needed before we can truly assess what has been achieved. However, over the short term it is possible to point to certain trends which in one way or another affect the future of international affairs. The reassertion of democracy as a fundamental value of human society is becoming more and more widespread among States.

(Mr. Holger, Chile)

Chile is an eloquent example of what I have just stated. Perhaps for that reason we should like the democratization movement, in which most of the Members of the Organization are involved today, to be extended to multilateral forums. However, Chile notes with concern that in regard to certain topics fundamental to international peace and security, such as a total ban on nuclear testing, the winds of democracy are not blowing as they are in other world political arenas.

The convening of the Conference to amend of the Moscow Treaty of 1963, a direct alternate solution to the problem, could be undermined by the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Conference on Disarmament. Unlike the earlier one, that Committee does not seem to be in an appropriate position to negotiate a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. If we take into account also the attitude of the major Powers, everything seems to indicate that the item on a nuclear-test ban is supposed to be solved by a small group of States. To judge by their behaviour, those States seem to be unaware that nuclear tests have adverse effects for mankind as a whole.

Nuclear explosions are without any doubt harmful to the environment. That has been recognized in this very forum by countries that have no direct interest in the subject, and by many authoritative international scientific bodies in the field. Chile and many other members of the Permanent South Pacific Commission have denounced on innumerable occasions the nuclear tests undertaken in the geographical area within the Commission's purview, and we shall not falter in our efforts to bring about an absolute end to those tests.

How can we interpret the present world situation? On the one hand, the major Powers are initiating a disarmament process, but on the other great stress is being laid on perfecting weapons capable of destroying the world several hundred times over. Is it not ironic that one nuclear Power, invoking democratization, should

(Mr. Holger, Chile)

announce its intention to continue nuclear tesing without considering the justified concerns of the countries in a large area of the world? Finding a solution to the question of nuclear tests is of course not simple, but that is no reason to create parallel bodies or to suggest approaches that will only contradict or disrupt genuine negotiations on the subject.

Our Government believes that the initiation of disarmament negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament is tremendously important. However, an analysis of the report it has presented to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly suggests that very meagre results have been achieved, owing mainly to the lack of political will shown by some of its members. If we consider that the Conference on Disarmament is the sole multilateral negotiating body in the area of disarmament, we cannot fail to express concern over its future. Furthermore, recent political events, such as the disappearance of ideological blocs and the reunification of States, raise questions about the membership of the Conference that must be resolved in a truly democratic way. Chile, now participating as an observer, is prepared to become a full member of the Conference and thus to contribute to the inauguration of the new disarmament era that should result from the positive political changes now taking place in the world.

The Government of Chile completely agrees with the objective of the total destruction of chemical weapons, and can only express concern over the delays in the negotiations taking place in the Conference on Disarmament. At the same time, we believe that if the relevant legal system is to be universally accepted, there must be no discrimination in favour of some countries and against others, nor must there be any norms that could hinder the simultaneous total destruction of all chemical-weapons arsenals. In addition, there must be an effective verification system guaranteeing objectivity in the implementation of the system.

(Mr. Holger, Chile)

The international community must take decisive action on the subject of outer space. Our country, which is doing landmark work in multilateral forums on that subject, does not believe it appropriate for various bodies are dealing with the subject while the ones directly concerned have no decision-making power. Preventing the militarization of outer space and ensuring its peaceful use for the benefit of mankind are two sides of the same coin, and they must both be accomplished within the shortest possible time.

Political changes in the lives of States are inevitably accompanied by structural and conceptual changes. States certainly are moving towards a new, multifaceted approach to security. Military concepts are no longer the only ones taken into account; other concepts, such as the elimination of the causes of peoples' insecurity and global approaches to the major world problems, are also being considered. Within that context, it is clear that there is an ever-closer link between the concepts of disarmament, development and the environment. We must absolutely allocate the economic resources released by the disarmament process to the solution of the rapidly increasing economic and ecological problems of the world. We must ensure stable, sustained economic development in an environment favourable to the development of human life.

The delegation of Chile entirely agrees with those countries that have called for the rationalization of the First Committee's work. The international community would assess at its true worth the work being done by the United Nations for international peace and security if we sent it an unequivocal message contained in a few clear and precise resolutions.

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(Mr. Holger, Chile)

The Government of Chile believes that the studies prepared by the United Nations on nuclear weapons and on the role of the Organization in the sphere of verification are important elements of the negotiations on disarmament, and we congratulate Maj Britt Theorin of Sweden and Mr. Fred Bild of Canada for their wise guidance of that work.

The challenges facing the world have not changed, but the attitude of States towards resolving them has. The Government of Chile believes that the community of nations cannot and must not fail to take advantage of the new hopes that are emerging. We face challenges with true political will and seek to show the world that the political changes now under way can become concrete facts.

Mr. BATIOUK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): I should like, in this statement, to speak on the work of the Disarmament Commission and of the Conference on Disarmament. Many members of this Committee have emphasized the significance of, and the ever-growing role played by, the United Nations in the disarmament process. In his address to the First Committee a week ago, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Ukraine said:

> "The Organization has proved its unique significance as the single world centre for harmonizing the will, positions and efforts of all States, above all in dealing with global universal issues." (A/C.1/45/PV.10, pp. 27-28)

The United Nations, as we see it, is the sole universal forum in which all Member States can make their own contributions to the disarmament process and can, in fact, make an impact on the process of strengthening international security through disarmament. In the disarmament machinery of the United Nations an eminent role is played by the Disarmament Commission. Recently there has been a search for means of rationalizing the activities of that body. The session of the Commission that took place this year demonstrated clearly the significant opportunities that, potentially, are available to it. Its achievements in the matter of ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Commission - results that are referred to in document A/45/42 - justify the assumption that that efficiency is improving significantly.

In our view, agreed measures - measures such as those designed to systematize the agenda of the Commission, limit the time for consideration of specific and really pressing issues, and regulate its work more satisfactorily - will make it possible to turn the Commission into a genuinely effective body of the United Nations.

(Mr. Batiouk, Ukrainian SSR)

The activity of the Conference on Disarmament has always been the subject of close attention in the First Committee. Judging by the general tone of the discussion, many delegations are seriously concerned at the slowness of the progress that has been achieved at the Conference. It seems to us that this concern is entirely justified. Indeed, the report of the Conference for 1990, like those of the past few years, provides definite grounds for such concern.

Of course, we note with satisfaction the progress that has been achieved at the negotiations concerning the drawing up of a convention on the banning and destruction of chemical weapons. We are happy that these negotiations are now reaching their final stage. Incidentally, this serves to confirm that productive global multilateral negotiations on real disarmament measures are entirely feasible.

We welcome also the creation, at the Conference, of a special committee on the banning of nuclear tests, although, up to now, it has not been possible to achieve general agreement on a negotiating mandate. That, however, is the only achievement that we can chalk up to the Conference for this year. Nevertheless, it is a positive development, but it cannot justify the fact that, to all intents and purposes, multilateral negotiations on the items on the extensive agenda of the Conference are virtually not being carried out.

For many years now, the Conference has failed to yield practical results. We cannot be conplacent in the face of the fact that its most recent specific agreements were drawn up more than 10 years ago. Such a situation today strikes a clearly dissonant note against the background of the successes achieved at bilateral Soviet-American and regional European negotiations on a great number of important areas of genuine disarmament.

In view of the dangerous escalation of militarization in some regions of the world, the objective of a global approach to the resolution of issues relating to

(Mr. Batiouk, Ukrainian SSR)

limitation of the arms race and to achieving disarmament, as well as a reduction in the general level of military confrontation, have become more relevant than ever.

We agree with those delegations that have emphasized that full use has not yet been made of the potential of the Conference on Disarmament as a negotiating body. I refer both to the opportunities inherent in the Conference and to the possibilities resulting from the rapid and radical positive changes in the international situation.

As is clear from the report of the Conference, the participants too are concerned at the lack of positive results, and they have begun to search for ways to enhance the efficiency of this forum. We wish them success in their efforts. In the view of the delegation of the Ukraine, these efforts should take account of the need to clarify the purpose of the Disarmament Conference and, in the new conditions, the role of multilateral mechanisms in general, and of the Conference in particular, in the disarmament process as a whole.

In our view, the Conference is simply indispensable, as it is the sole negotiating body. Genuine disarmament and demilitarization, in the context of international relations, can be lasting and effective only if they are global.

The need for a review of the agenda of the Conference arises from time to time. Clearly, over a period, anything can be subject to review, clarification or change in form. The present agenda is very comprehensive, but it is not covered fully by the work of the Conference. To some extent we agree that, in its present form, the agenda is not a practical basis on which to draw up appropriate multilateral agreements. Perhaps some of its items are still too general - insufficiently specific - to become subjects for negotiation. But the most important thing is not the agenda; rather, it is the political will of the multilateral forum to carry on multilateral negotiations aimed at drawing up appropriate specific agreements and real disarmament measures.

(Mr. Batiouk, Ukrainian SSR)

In this regard, we are conscious that something is missing. This gap must, first and foremost, be filled. The agenda can always be amended so long as there is a readiness to carry on negotiations. In its present form it allows for work in many important areas.

In respect of certain issues, such as nuclear disarmament and the prevention of war, it would be possible to single out specific points that are most promising from the point of view of reaching practical agreements. In this regard, appropriate proposals have already been made.

In our view, membership of the Disarmament Conference and participation in its negotiations is a serious question. The Ukrainian SSR is following carefully the work of the Conference. As we should like to make our own contribution to that work, we have been following with particular interest the exchange of views on the question of enhancing the effectiveness of the Conference, with particular reference to membership and to the participation of observers in its work. Experience suggests that there is a need for all countries interested in any of these issues - for example, negotiations on a convention on the banning of chemical weapons and on the destruction of stockpiles of such weapons - to participate in the negotiations in one form or another. The extent of the convention's universality will determine its effectiveness and its fate. That is why we regard it as desirable that in the final stages of work on the convention there be greater participation of States that are not members. This applies also to other negotiations, whether present or future, for global disarmament requires a global approach and global participation.

(Mr. Batiouk, Ukrainian SSR)

On the other hand, we are all aware of the fact that serious negotiations are productive in a forum with limited membership. In fact, that was the basis for drawing up the original membership of the Conference on Disarmament, then the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

Nevertheless, we believe that a compromise between these two extreme methods of dealing with one and the same problem can be found if we approach the matter flexibly and realistically, guided by the principle of focusing on the objective.

One could possibly find the solution by simplifying the question of the participation of observers in the work of the Conference, or in the work of its individual bodies, for example, the ad hoc committees and working groups. Perhaps it would be possible for the membership of the ad hoc committees of the Conference not to correspond exactly to that of the Conference: in other words, to give all countries involved an opportunity to conduct negotiations within the framework of the Conference on issues of interest to them, on an equal footing, regardless of whether they are formal members of the Conference or not.

Naturally, there may be other proposals and other solutions to this problem, but one thing is clear, and that is that the crucial changes that are taking place in the world today offer us an opportunity to make a breakthrough in the cause of multilateral disarmament, and it would be inexcusable to let that opportunity slip.

Our delegation is gratified by the fact that, as is clear from the report of the Conference, very many States are demonstrating a definite and vital interest in its work, and in that we see grounds for optimism for its work in the future.

Mr. GARCIA MORITAN (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to express to you, Sir, our delegation's pleasure at your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We are familiar with your diplomatic skills, which you have already amply demonstrated, and therefore we have great confidence in your

(Mr. Garcia Moritan, Argentina)

guidance of the work of the First Committee at this session. You can count on my delegation's full co-operation.

In the course of the last year and a half we have witnessed facts, particularly with the thawing of the cold war, that confirm that the world has evolved much more than we perhaps realize or are willing to admit. But whatever the case may be, there is no doubt that a formidable challenge is taking shape which the international community is going to have to face. This challenge concerns each and every State and cannot be ignored.

The new structuring in international relations in the field of security does not necessarily imply using the imagination ex nihilo. Quite the contrary, like any human undertaking, it will in some way be influenced by the past, although there is no doubt that it will have its own rationale, with many different configurations of power and security interests.

We are convinced that the best way to avoid repeating the dogmatic experiences or political guidelines that have characterized the framework of power in this century is to develop a comprehensive perception of collective security that includes, among other factors, the decision to approach disarmament issues with determination, the adoption of attitudes of increasing transparency and confidence-building, and the beginning of a multilateral process which gives renewed dynamism to international co-operation.

It is time to move ahead in the building of a more integrated world, one in which reason and the sovereign equality of States prevail. We all, without exception, share a responsibility for what happens on our planet, and it will be up to us all to find equitable and lasting solutions. It should not be such a difficult task inasmuch as we share common goals and problems that are more important than the ones that divide us, such as: overcoming poverty and economic

(Mr. Garcia Moritan, Argentina)

stagnation; ensuring social justice; defending the dignity of man; protecting the environment; scientific and technological co-operation as an instrument of development; and, in our area, a new criterion on disarmament.

There already exist different forums and negotiating bodies. From a global perspective, all those parallel processes, apparently unrelated, have an internal logic and coherence that must not be overlooked. This is seen clearly in the multiple links between the various weapons systems that are being negotiated. If we had to identify a single link shared by them all, it could be found in the fact that, independent of their final results, they aim at redefining international security.

The building of a new network of international relations in the area of security is essentially a multilateral task that cannot be delegated. It is precisely in this field that, in our opinion, the Conference on Disarmament - contrary to what some see as its inevitable apathy - is called upon to play a relevant role. We are determined to undertake an unbiased and realistic analysis of its agenda, and in so doing concentrate on setting concrete goals that supersede the aimless ritual with which some issues are dealt.

We cannot conceive that a body of a different nature would be able to deal adequately with the set of common security issues emerging in a world where bipolar confrontation has significantly diminished. It is precisely this forum, where States from the North and the South are represented, that can contribute to analysing from a different perspective the essentially Eurocentric vision of international security.

If we have put forward these thoughts it is because we consider it important to emphasize that it is time to think of the options that the new circumstances

(Mr. Garcia Moritan, Argentina)

impose on us. In this sense, we believe that in order to deal with the problems of the future, we have to take hold of the present with a sense of responsibility and find an appropriate solution for the issues that are still pending.

A treaty on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban is the logical outcome of the evolution of the international situation and, as was acknowledged very recently by one of the military alliances, this makes it possible for us today to envisage a world in which the role of nuclear weapons is losing importance.

As everyone knows, nuclear-weapon tests have a definite purpose, namely, to make it possible for arsenals to be modernized and to incorporate new systems that are more precise and more lethal. How then do we reconcile the reality of two alliances that virtually do not acknowledge each other as opponents with the continuation of these test programmes?

Those of us who are observing this situation attentively might interpret it as the lack of a real will to abandon the arms race once and for all. In this context, if the bilateral talks between the two major nuclear-weapon States concerning their strategic systems are a means of modernizing their arsenals, it would make perfect sense to refuse to agree to a complete ban on nuclear-weapon tests.

A multilateral effort to put an end to all tests by all States for all time - which we all very much desire - should, if it is to be a credible instrument, be negotiated with the active involvement of all the Powers that carry out nuclear-weapon tests and should not become an agreement that condones the continuation of these tests through mechanisms that make them possible, albeit at lower levels.

(Mr. Garcia Moritan, Argentina)

The central axis of the negotiations must be the structure of the treaty, its scope and the modalities for verification and compliance. It is important to stress that these are interrelated questions, directly linked to the final objective. In short, each of these elements presents aspects that must be dealt with as a whole, according to the internal logic that emerges from the discussions.

(Mr. Garcia Moritan, Argentina)

I should like to quote what the Argentine and Brazilian delegations pointed out in a joint statement in the Conference on Disarmament on 16 August, on the item concerning nuclear-weapon tests:

"Precisely because we are aware of the importance of those aspects of security linked to nuclear activity, we have shaped unique patterns of co-operation and harmonization of our joint policies on the main international issues in the nuclear area. They are well known, and perhaps the experience we have gained at the bilateral level in Latin America may be useful when the moment arrives to establish mechanisms that link the treaty on the complete ban of nuclear-weapon tests with the existing international agreements on the subject and with other relevant instruments".

Much has been said about the complete and final ending of nuclear-weapon tests as a goal. It will not be an easy task, but, if there is a real commitment on everybody's part, concluding a satisfactory agreement to put an end to the qualitative and quantitative development of nuclear arsenals in a reasonable time should not be a Utopian dream. In this context, the Conference on the amendment of the partial test-ban Treaty provides us, in our opinion, with another opportunity to discuss all the aspects related to the subject and try to harmonize positions.

At a time when we are reviewing patterns that seemed to be unchangeable realities, it is difficult to understand the lack of multilateral progress in the area of nuclear disarmament. It is really surprising that inaction has persisted even in the field of negative security assurances. Since the time when nuclear States issued their unilateral declarations, between 1978 and 1982, a very important change has taken place in the world. At a time when a hand is offered to

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the one that until yesterday was an enemy, and even when each party still keeps its nuclear arsenals almost complete, the non-nuclear-weapon States cannot yet see their security strengthened by an agreement not conditioned by negative security assurances.

It has become customary to recognize the unquestionable importance that outer space has for the international community. Therefore, I will not dwell extensively on the different types of activities, including those of a military and strategic nature, that some States are continuing to carry out in space. I do believe it is important to emphasize that the international scene at the end of the century has, as far as outer space is concerned, different aspects from those that were characteristic of the past three decades and at the same time it poses increasingly serious questions from the viewpoints of global strategy and security.

A very superficial analysis shows that on the subject of outer space there still prevail criteria of exclusivity and partiality that have hindered the beginning of specific negotiations. In that regard, it is sufficient to read thoroughly the report of the Conference on Disarmament. However, the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space this year has brought out some new aspects that, in our opinion, should be followed up.

The concept of confidence-building measures in outer space is gaining more and more advocates, and the different proposals by a number of delegations reflect enough consensus on dealing with the subject in a more substantive and systematic way. This task will undoubtedly be complex and should not be carried out to the detriment of other equally important subjects which the Ad Hoc Committee should continue to consider just as earnestly. For that reason we are sure that a group of governmental experts might carry out this special work thoroughly and contribute

(Mr. Garcia Moritan, Argentina)

to the enrichment of global consideration of the subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The final stage of the negotiations on a convention on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons calls for a series of additional efforts from all of us to continue fostering the balance and coherence of the draft convention and to speed up the pace of the negotiating process. For that reason we welcome all initiatives aimed at that objective. We have acted accordingly with the Conferences of Paris and Canberra. We should like to point out with the same emphasis that the experience we have acquired in the past year and a half leads us to stress that we must avoid taking steps that may generate expectations that at a later stage will not be realized, particularly if the willingness to conclude the instrument is not maintained. With an evolving text that would be a treaty today if there had been enough political will, all the States committed to the final results of these negotiations must endeavour to take measures pertaining to the pragmatic aspects of the convention and to the quality of the future mechanisms in order to guarantee their efficiency and to ensure universal adherence.

This year the First Committee has received two documents concerning the work done by governmental groups of experts appointed by the Secretary-General in the field of verification and that of nuclear weapons. These studies reflect another important aspect of the work of the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations, headed with so much devotion by Mr. Akashi, to whom we should like to pay a tribute here. We should also like to take up some aspects of those documents.

The study (A/45/372) concerning the role of the United Nations in the field of verification contains some conclusions worth mentioning. For example, paragraph 257 states that the Group concluded that the United Nations should pay

(Mr. Garcia Moritan, Argentina)

more attention to the multilateral aspects of verification, and this could be done through the establishment of an adequate data base, through a greater activity in the field of information and through its role as a depositary of disarmament instruments.

Along these lines, and with the objective that the United Nations may become the axis of the future process of disarmament, the Group of Experts considered the possibility that the Organization might use aircraft for verification purposes and that the United Nations might develop and put into orbit a network of satellites in order to verify agreements on disarmament.

Together with these specific ideas, which seem to be more and more necessary, the chapter entitled "Conclusions and recommendations" refers to the possibility of creating an integrated multilateral system of international verification, pointing out:

> "The same basic reasons which have led to a multilateral approach to certain arms limitation and disarmament questions also raise the issue of a multilateral framework to ensure the verification of resulting disarmament agreements". (A/45/372, para. 275)

The study recalls that the majority of the international community does not have

> "the means to perform the full range of tasks nor do they have access to the necessary expertise" (ibid.)

Among the comments of the Group of Experts on this issue, we should point out that, in their opinion, the establishment of an international system of verification must be seen as a possible result of an evolutionary process, which could be reached, inter alia, through the creation of

> "an 'umbrella' verification organization resulting from the co-ordination or merging of two or more future verification systems". (ibid., para. 276)

(Mr. Garcia Moritan, Argentina)

Those of us who have participated actively in the multilateral process of negotiation at the Conference on Disarmament are aware of the real need for a multilateral system with regard to verification. It was for this reason, among others, that, prior to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the delegations of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania encouraged this idea at the highest governmental level. Accordingly, it is now important for the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to begin implementation of the suggestions contained in the document to which I have just referred.

Document A/45/373 contains other information provided by the group of experts and presents additional information to that provided in the report (A/35/392) submitted to the General Assembly 10 years ago. Although the work has been intensive, it is not always easy to complement a document that is one of the most complete and serious of the series of disarmament studies. Unfortunately, in our opinion, the study done in 1990 has not maintained the balance achieved in 1980. In the new document there is excessive emphasis on hypothetical proliferation, conveying the false impression that the real threat to peace lies in horizontal rather than in vertical proliferation, whereas arsenals have multiplied significantly in the period between the first and second reports although the number of nuclear-weapon States has remained the same.

One of the most significant differences between the developed and the developing countries lies in the huge priority that the former give to technological and scientific factors. Recognizing this, some States believe that access to the major scientific and technological sources is a key element in overcoming the tragedy of stagnation that afflicts some societies today.

(Mr. Garcia Moritan, Argentina)

We are convinced that the new approaches in international relations will also modify the restrictive criteria relating to access to state-of-the-art technology so as to replace the hierarchical patterns and the technological oligopolies which in the last four decades have demonstrated not only their inefficiency but, even worse, their unfairness.

A dynamic and thorough mechanism of co-operation in the scientific and technological fields, in particular in areas such as nuclear energy, space, chemistry and biology, on a basis of equality, rather than on a discriminatory basis will make possible the implementation of an effective, genuine and universal system of confidence-building in international relations and, at the same time, make a decisive contribution to economic and social development. The Secretary-General, in his report on the work of the Organization, lay special stress on the need to tackle this operation.

Some experiences deserve thorough analysis and could serve as a basis in this connection. Some of these are of a regional, multilateral nature and others of a bilateral nature. The Permanent Representative of Brazil referred to the latter type in his statement some days ago and they are contained in the document circulated by Argentina and Brazil under the symbol A/45/586.

Argentina and Brazil, as everyone knows, are among the States that in the last few decades have vigorously implemented programmes in the field of energy designed to enable them to achieve a degree of autonomy that will make it possible for them to meet their needs. In a highly technologically advanced world, with serious supply problems, of which no one is unaware, to have our own scientific and technological bases would seriously affect our common priority objective of economic and social development.

(Mr. Garcia Moritan, Argentina)

Given the nature and characteristics of the technologies involved, some years ago we began an almost unique process of integration, complementarity and co-ordination which today enables us to affirm that there are not many examples of two programmes of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes that have established such a solid and transparent system of confidence and mutual benefit as that existing between Argentina and Brazil.

We hope that our experience of regional integration and co-operation will serve as a basis for encouraging a comprehensive process at the international level in state-of-the-art technology aimed at putting an end to underdevelopment and, at the same time, contributing to the strengthening of peace and stability. We know from our own experience that the two objectives are perfectly complementary.

Mr. BENDJAMA (Algeria) (interpretation from French): I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the delegations of countries members of the Arab Maghreb Union: the Libyan Arab Jamahariya, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania and Algeria.

Mr. Chairman, the delegations of the Arab Maghreb Union are happy to associate themselves with delegations that have already expressed satisfaction at seeing you guiding the work of the First Committee. Your personal qualities and great diplomatic experience are clearly an outstanding guarantee of the success of our work. I should like to add to our sincere congratulations the assurance that you have the full support and co-operation of our delegations.

The positive developments in international relations that have taken place throughout this year have been fully reflected in the markedly tranquil atmosphere during the general debate on questions of disarmament which traditionally marks the opening of the work of our Committee. There can be no doubt that the East-West

(Mr. Bendjama, Algeria)

ideological confrontation, for which our Assembly was at the same time a forum and a witness, has disappeared, to give way to the fruitful exercise of dialogue and negotiation within the international community.

Nor can there be any doubt that the newly acquired trust between the great Powers is extremely important in the revitalization of the peace process for numerous regional conflicts which have recently been brought to our Organization with their train of suffering, injustice and despair.

Lastly, there can be no doubt that the retreat of the philosophy of power and the resurgence of confidence offer the United Nations and, in particular, the First Committee an unexpected field for investigation and recommendation to promote the highly relevant objectives of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, on disarmament.

That said, I should like to express the hope that in our common search for general and complete disarmament the ideological confrontation of yesterday will not be replaced by an even more frustrating conflict between the egoism of the richest and strongest and the legitimate claims of the third world, which for so long now has aspired to peace, justice and economic and social development.

(Mr. Bendjama, Algeria)

The new atmosphere prevailing in our work naturally owes a great deal to the continued improvement in Soviet-American relations. The signing and implementation of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles is the most striking example so far. The next important step, we hope, will be the 30-per-cent - and perhaps 50-per-cent - reduction in strategic nuclear arsenals.

This demonstrates that in the field of disarmament, with which we are concerned today, nuclear catastrophe represents the most serious challenge to mankind. To employ negotiation, with all its virtues, in order to reduce and eventually eliminate the danger of a nuclear apocalypse is and must remain our primary task in this forum. So long as that terrifying threat of mankind's extinction continues to exist, any progress towards eliminating other weapons systems, notwithstanding their merits, will remain relative.

And it is in the field of nuclear disarmament - notwithstanding the progress made in the bilateral American-Soviet negotiations - that we find ourselves unable, unfortunately, to affirm that the process of the total elimination of the nuclear threat has been truly entered into. At best we are talking about a reduction of arsenals that are already more than large enough to annihilate all life on our planet several times over.

Therefore, in theory the risk of a nuclear catastrophe has not been reduced, and if proof of the inadequacy of that exercise is required we need only refer to the continued explicit reluctance of certain nuclear Powers to offer non-nuclear States specific and binding guarantees against the use or threat of use of nuclear arms within the framework of an international legal instrument

Even more serious is the fact that the exercise itself has been outstripped by the continuing arms race, which is now directed towards ever-more-sophisticated systems of total destruction and which puts a heavy burden on the efforts that have so far been made to deal with the quantitative aspects of nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Bendjama, Algeria)

The danger of this headlong pursuit is one that our Committee has been obliged to note every year for two decades now by reaffirming that continuing nuclear testing lies at the very heart of the arms race. For three decades numerous appeals have been launched, in vain, for a total halt to nuclear tests, which are the direct source of the ongoing development of nuclear weapons and their horizontal proliferation.

In less than three months the Conference to amend the Moscow Treaty will be held here with the goal of promulgating a universal ban on all nuclear tests in all environments. Here, we would voice the hope that the nuclear Powers will join in working towards that simple but radical goal and abandon their approach consisting of a gradual reduction in the strength of underground tests, which, in the last analysis, will only lead to regulating a continuing nuclear-arms race.

It is obvious that the road to nuclear disarmament will necessarily be long and strewn with obstacles so long as there are still elements concerned with preserving past positions and the dubious security of nuclear deterrence. That is why our Committee at a very early stage decided to rise above that view by proposing to make entire regions of the globe safe by declaring them nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The African leaders courageously embarked upon that course at their very first meeting at Addis Ababa in 1964. However, their efforts have been and are still being thwarted by the will to power of a racist régime, the régime of South Africa, which is continuing to subject the entire continent to the threat of total destruction. Is there any need to emphasize here that it is South Africa's nuclear capability that underlies the entire problem, and that the abhorrent apartheid régime that prevails in that country only serves to heighten the threat? Need we note the inconsistency of the argument that has been so complacently employed in the general debate, according to which South Africa's nuclear capability has

(Mr. Bendjama, Algeria)

miraculously vanished now that there have been a few signs - albeit exceedingly feeble - of a possible dismantling of the apartheid system?

With or without the system of apartheid the same potential threat remains, and we will not cease calling for its total elimination and denouncing those who participate in it by delivering materiel or technical assistance for its technological improvement.

Should we be surprised, indeed, that the principal accomplice of the apartheid régime in its manufacture of nuclear weapons is another régime of the very same stripe whose inhumane practices with regard to the Palestinian people, deprived of their lands, are regularly condemned by the international community. A heavy burden of responsibility rests upon those who, through their guilty silence or tacit complicity, have enabled that régime to develop such terrifying destructive capabilities with impunity and outside any international control, intended as they are to fulfil its desire for regional domination by means of nuclear blackmail. Last year's test firing by the Zionist authorities of a missile capable of carrying nuclear warheads and whose trajectory ended off the coast of Libya proves, if any proof were needed, the reality of that threat.

Early last year, following the Paris Conference, we had hopes for a new political impetus in multilateral negotiations on chemical weapons within the framework of the Ad Hoc Committee established by the Conference on Disarmament for that purpose. The expected acceleration of the negotiations did not, unfortunately, occur. On the contrary, during the summer session we witnessed a serious and deliberate challenge to the earlier consensus on questions we regard as fundamental. We cannot stand idly by and allow the negotiations to be diverted from their initial goal, namely, the total elimination of chemical weapons, and turned instead towards a mere non-proliferation treaty, a legal instrument of whose

(Mr. Bendjama, Algeria)

limitations and drawbacks we are all well aware, based on past experience in the nuclear field.

However, we welcomed with great satisfaction the breakthrough achieved last June within the framework of Soviet-American negotiations with regard to the difficult question of the priority and timetable for the destruction of 98 per cent of chemical-weapon stockpiles and installations. Nevertheless, the conditions laid down for the destruction of the balance, namely, adherence to the Convention by all so-called capable or essential States, implicitly tends to set up a non-proliferation régime of undefined duration. Our fears with regard to this change in the defined goals of multilateral negotiations have been reinforced by the continuing reluctance some have evidenced with regard to the very notion of a ban on the use of chemical weapons. Such reluctance clearly reveals their intention not to proceed with the destruction of all chemical stockpiles and in fact to maintain their reservations to the 1925 Geneva Protocol, even though they do not say so formally.

(Mr. Bendjama, Algeria)

We are fully aware that the road to general and complete disarmament is long and full of obstacles and that we will need to proceed gradually as confidence grows. Reduced ideological antagonism and positive developments in regional conflicts have in many fields restored to our international Organization the authority it needs to exercise the multiple mandates given it. The field of concerted action and multilateral co-operation is expanding day by day to include new questions facing mankind - from acid rain to drugs, from AIDS to drift-net fishing.

How therefore can we fail to feel surprise and regret at the absence of real progress in forums for multilateral negotiations on questions of disarmament, which has from the very outset of our Organization been one of its principal objectives?

How can we fail to express concern at the semi-paralysis of that unique forum for multilateral negotiation, the Conference on Disarmament, which through procedural devices is prevented from engaging in substantive consideration of nuclear disarmament, which must remain the priority of us all?

I refer to our concern at year after year seeing the Conference devote the majority of its meetings - 65 per cent this year - to the question of chemical weapons. I am also alluding to our legitimate question concerning the future of that valuable framework for negotiation once the Convention banning chemical weapons has been adopted.

Concerning the Disarmament Commission, this year's session will allow us to conclude consideration of numerous agenda items. But let there be no mistake. The important concessions we have made within the framework of drawing up consensus documents should not be interpreted as our going back on the political principles and positions that we, with the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries, have

(Mr. Bendjama, Algeria)

always championed in this forum. That effort at conciliation and compromise should above all be perceived as an expression of political will to achieve a common denominator - even the smallest possible one - in the analysis of and conclusions on these agenda items.

A few weeks from now, during discussion of the contents of the agenda for the Disarmament Commission's next session, we shall demonstrate the same spirit of openness and the same will to compromise, for of course we share the concern expressed here by many delegations regarding making our work in this framework for agreement as effective as possible.

That is why we expect the new agenda - which of necessity will be more limited - to focus more on the objectives entrusted to the Commission at the tenth special session of the General Assembly, among which nuclear disarmament - I repeat, nuclear disarmament - must continue to occupy a most important place.

At this crucial stage in the modern history of mankind, multilateralism - with all it implies for the participation of all on an equal footing - is a valuable development and provides a viable framework for work in our joint endeavours towards general and complete disarmament. We hope that the present session will provide proof that it has positive results if the political will exists and if all States assume their full role in resuming dialogue in order to achieve the objective, which for all of us is peace, security and social development.

Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Uruguay is very pleased to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee and also to congratulate the members of the Bureau. We look forward to giving you our support at a time when matters considered in the Committee are having a special influence on the new international climate.

(Mr. Piriz-Ballon, Uruguay)

The peoples of the world attach great importance to the problems of peace and security as a result of the ideological disarmament between the two major blocs which divided the world.

We should now try to ensure that this ideological disarmament will lead to the end of the arms race, which can perhaps best be accomplished by strengthening the United Nations system. There are certainly clear indications that this is what is happening. Next month's summit meeting in Paris will put the final stamp on a new form of European security; bloody conflicts are tending to be resolved; bilaterally, the Soviet Union and the United States can point to significant achievements in their disarmament negotiations.

But this new climate is not really widespread, nor has it magically resolved all the ills that beset the world.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the first conflict to arise in the post-cold-war period, brings us face to face with stark reality. It also reveals flaws in the system of collective security which had been overshadowed by East-West rivalries and theoretical bipolar schemes.

The crisis in the Gulf was caused largely by an arms race that had run amok, and now we are faced with an overriding need to create disarmament machinery as a matter of great urgency.

As the head of the Uruguayan delegation, Mr. Gros Espiell, stated at this session of the General Assembly, on 4 October 1990:

> "The international community must avoid the occurrence of similar dangerous situations in the future. That will be possible only if we accelerate the disarmament process. Uruguay understands that the immediate task is to concentrate on further advancing the regulation and limitation of armaments, whether conventional, nuclear, chemical, bacteriological or radiological, or space weapons.

(Mr. Piriz-Ballon, Uruguay)

"The task must be carried out through the launching of new negotiations or acceleration of the current ones, the preparation of new conventions on the subject, the ratification of existing treaties by those States that have not yet done so; the creation of more nuclear-weapon-free zones, and the improvement and strengthening of the existing ones, and the full establishment of zones of peace." (A/45/PV.21, p. 8)

The concept of security should not be limited to a mere balance of military forces based on a parody of the arms race.

We must realize that instability, insecurity and underdevelopment are injustices caused by the arms race. Giving priority to military security over other areas of life only further intensifies the vicious circle of underdevelopment, the arms race and insecurity.

Future years should bear witness to a massive diversion of financial, technological and human resources from the military to other more productive areas.

(Mr. Piriz-Ballon, Uruguay)

The intelligent use of the peace dividends will be one of the keys to breaking the vicious cycle to which I have just referred. The environmental aspect of security and the interrelationship of disarmament, development and the environment have all been highlighted in the course of this debate, particularly eloquently by the Ambassador of Brazil. The mere existence of nuclear, chemical, radiological and bacteriological weapons, and the carrying out of nuclear tests are clearly the greatest threats to the environment. For that reason we enthusiastically support the initiative put forward last week by the representative of Sweden, Ambassador Maj Theorin.

As the report of the Secretary-General to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly correctly points out:

> "We are witnessing a situation in which political developments have fast overtaken the cautious pace of negotiations to limit arms and armaments." (A/45/1, p. 17)

My delegation believes that nuclear non-proliferation is a particularly urgent concern in the multilateral sphere. Uruguay believes that the Non-Proliferation Treaty is the best instrument for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. But the Treaty is not only about non-proliferation. Nuclear-free zones, zones of peace, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards agreements are, inter alia, efficient means to achieve the common goal of combating the various forms of proliferation.

The Fourth Review Conference of the Non-proliferation Treaty could have gone further, particularly with regard to guarantees for non-nuclear countries. But we should be comforted by the significant achievements of the recent Geneva meeting when the most thorough debate held thus far took place precisely on the subject of non-proliferation.

(Mr. Piriz-Ballon, Uruguay)

Regrettably, on the question of nuclear-test bans it was not possible to reconcile positions enough to achieve more positive and concrete results. In our opinion this subject is at the heart of the debate on non-proliferation. We cannot agree that greater technological perfection of atomic arsenals as a result of testing will in any way lead to global peace and security - certainly not in present circumstances. Notwithstanding the sensitivity of the item, my delegation is convinced that we must make progress in this area. It is in this spirit that Uruguay will participate in the Conference that will be held next January to amend the Moscow Treaty.

The mere fact that the possibility now exists that chemical weapons use will be used in a regional conflict highlights once again the urgent need to accelerate work in the Conference on Disarmament aimed at concluding a convention banning the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and the total destruction of all existing stockpiles; on the basis of non-discrimination, universal application and verification. We trust that the proposed ministerial meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will give a decisive impetus to the final drafting of this document.

On conventional disarmament, my delegation welcomes the unprecedented success recorded at the regional level in Europe within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Nevertheless, we are concerned that the envisaged reductions in the level of armaments in Europe may lead to the transfer of arms surpluses to other regions. Once again a crisis in the Middle East provides a harsh lesson, that we must seek machinery to limit all dealings in weapons and ensure their transparency. In this sense my delegation supports the appeal of the Secretary-General for

> "earnest consideration to be given to establishing an international arms transfer register as a step towards curbing what has been a burgeoning trade." (A/45/1, p. 19)

(Mr. Piriz-Ballon, Uruguay)

We believe also that the report of the Group of Experts approved this year in the Disarmament Commission by consenses provides useful material for further progress in this area.

Finally, allow me to offer a few thoughts on the rationalization of the First Committee's work. Throughout the present general debate we have heard many appeals for realism, pragmatism and a sense of responsibility, which, it is hoped, will lead to positive concrete results. My delegation completely agrees with these appeals which suggest that we should not set for ourselves unrealistic goals that cannot be achieved. But enlightened realism should be creative and based on a real determination to advance with a sense of historical perspective. The outer limit of rationalization is, after all, respect for the opinions of others. The past session of the Disarmament Commission is a good illustration of that trend.

My delegation will support rationalization efforts that have already been mentioned, such as combining similar draft resolutions, removing from the agenda items that are no longer relevant, and considering other items every two or three years when long-term aims are involved. We shall participate in a constructive spirit in the consideration of any other measures that might be proposed.

It is in that spirit and within those guidelines that Uruguay once again expresses its confidence in the role the United Nations plays in work for international peace and security.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
19th meeting
held on
Friday, 26 October 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. RANA (Nepal)

later: Mr. MORRIS (Australia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 46 TO 66 AND 155 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. BILOA TANG (Cameroon) (interpretation from French): I should like, first of all, to join with previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election and on the way in which you are guiding our proceedings. I am sure that our work will be successful.

I should also like to congratulate the delegation of the Soviet Union on the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to President Gorbachev.

Thanks to the remarkable improvement in the relations between Washington and Moscow, the rapid advance of historic events in Central and Eastern Europe, the prospects glimpsed in Asia and elsewhere, the thaw between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact, the conclusion of many important agreements on disarmament and the re-emergence of multilateralism, which helps to strengthen the role of the United Nations, the work of our Committee is taking place this year in an exceptional international climate.

While it is supported and encouraged by the political will of all States, this improvement in the international climate still seems to us to suggest the need for thorough consideration of the various aspects of the question of disarmament and the maintenance of international peace and security at a time when the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nation impel us to take heed of our duty to preser e future generations from the scourge of war.

Many non-aligned countries have noted that the arms race, both nuclear and conventional, constitutes a particularly harmful factor in the destabilization of developing countries. This is also the case in Cameroon, which is not a military

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

Power and whose major concern is still the improvement of the living standards of its people. However, if we are to attain that main objective it is essential that peace should prevail and that disputes be settled by peaceful means.

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

Similarly, and apart from the fact that resources that could have financed development are devoted to military purposes, the arms race in its various forms impedes efforts to establish the conditions for genuine peace and makes it more difficult to settle disputes between States peacefully.

For Cameroon, disarmament - nuclear disarmament in particular - is an essential part of any serious effort to ensure security and promote development at the national, regional and international levels. That is why we have always supported and will unhesitatingly continue to support initiatives and agreements on disarmament, both bilaterally and in our Organization.

Cameroon remains dedicated to the purposes and principles proclaimed by the Charter and attaches particular importance to disarmament and the maintenance of peace. In this connection we welcome the positive and encouraging developments in international negotiations on this question since the last session. In areas where confrontation has been the norm for so many years, attitudes and perceptions are now changing significantly, and long-held divergent views are being reconciled. This trend must be encouraged.

We note with satisfaction the considerable progress achieved in the Soviet-United States bilateral disarmament negotiation. Since the signing of the 1987 Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - those negotiations have led to the agreement on the destruction of chemical weapons reached last June in Washington, to two important protocols on verification relating to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to the Treaty on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, and to a joint declaration on conventional forces in Europe.

We note with equal satisfaction significant reduction in strategic offensive armaments, as well as the time-table that has been envisaged for the conclusion and signature of the START II Treaty - that is, before the end of this year.

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

We are grateful to the two super-Powers for having decided to allow the United Nations fully to play its central role in disarmament. That decision meets the concerns of Cameroon, which had made similar proposals at the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, in 1987. Moreover, we thank the Member States that have always supported this Cameroonian initiative, thereby enabling the Disarmament Commission successfully to conclude its work on the question in May 1990. On the basis of the excellent report of the Disarmament Commission, our Committee should be able to adopt action-oriented recommendations.

In our view, arms control and the quest for peace should be a constant concern of all States. All nations should be involved in the work for arms control and the reduction of all threats to peace, including non-military threats if we truly wish to replace relations of confrontation by bonds of co-operation encompassing all regions of the world.

The reduction of their military budgets and programmes has enabled some developed countries to cancel the debts of the poorest countries and to adopt measures to help medium-income countries, thereby giving concrete expression to the already acknowledged link between disarmament and development. While reiterating our appreciation for these initiatives, which Cameroon would like to see extended, we should point out that the peace dividends have not yet been equitably distributed in all regions of the world: the third world sees its economic and social situation constantly deteriorating and remains confronted by numerous non-military threats to peace - namely, poverty, destitution, the heavy debt burden, the population explosion, illiteracy and hunger.

In the international community, energetic measures are necessary to give further concrete expression to the link between disarmament and development and to help the nations of the South deal with the aforementioned threats.

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

With regard to the Disarmament Commission, the adoption of a document on the rationalization of its work and the consensus reached in that Commission, during its last session, on questions as sensitive and complex as South Africa's nuclear capacity, the strengthening of the United Nations role in disarmament, conventional disarmament and the third disarmament decade constitute remarkable progress and real cause for hope.

We hope that the Commission will soon conclude its work on questions that are still pending. Similarly, we consider that in deciding on the agenda of upcoming sessions of the Commission member States should reach an agreement on the criteria governing the choice of items, whose universal application, relevance and interest will enable the Commission to have fruitful deliberations, to the benefit of internati nal peace and security.

My delegation is also pleased to note that rationalization of the First Committee's work is being pursued successfully, thanks to the efforts of its successive Chairmen and on the on the basis of the 1987 Cameroonian proposal in this connection. We hope that this beneficial development, which has already been reflected in a considerable reduction in the number of resolutions, will be extended to the Conference on Disarmament and will accelerate the attainment of the awaited agreements.

Cameroon regrets that despite the progress made on some items on its agenda, the Fourth Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was unable to adopt a final document by consensus owing to major differences on the problem of the cessation of nuclear testing, safeguards and the future of the Treaty.

Hence we must ensure progress during our consultations on these questions at this session, in order to strengthen the international non-proliferation régime, taking into account the vertical and horizontal proliferation of modern weapons and

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

their delivery vehicles and the introduction of increasingly sophisticated chemical, biological, nuclear and conventional weapons in some regions of the world, in particular those in the grip of chronic political tensions.

In this connection, we share the idea that parties to negotiations on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe should be able to take steps to guarantee that the weapons covered by the understanding will not contribute to fanning the flames of existing or potential conflicts in other regions of the world.

In view of the importance of the cessation of nuclear tests to an effective quest for disarmament, Cameroon is happy about the convening of the Conference to amend the partial nuclear-test ban Treaty, which we hope will result in a complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. At the same time, the depositary Powers of the NPT should be able to decree on a provisional basis, pending the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban, an immediate moratorium on all these tests, and they should encourage negotiations on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict international control.

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

With regard to the convention on chemical weapons, my delegation believes that the progress already made on the structure of the text and the encouragement given by the Paris Conference and the recent Soviet-American agreement on those weapons should enable the Conference on Disarmament at next year's meeting in Geneva on this question to adopt a definitive text. We hope that the First Committee will support that work by adopting by consensus a resolution containing specific recommendations.

Multilateral and bilateral disarmament efforts can succeed only if they are supplemented at the regional level by the promotion of confidence-building measures and disarmament and security measures between the States involved. That was the reason for the initiative taken by Cameroon in 1987 on Central Africa, dealing with the consideration and adoption by the States members of the Community of Central African States of a range of measures designed to strengthen confidence, security, economic co-operation and disarmament in that region.

We are encouraged by the attention and support given to that initiative by the international community. The United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs organized the first meeting of experts of our subregion in Lomé in 1988. We hope that it will also organize the second meeting of experts, scheduled to be held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, in 1991, on a date yet to be agreed, to consider every aspect of our proposal and to draw up recommendations for the authorities of the 10 States concerned.

Chemical-weapon-free zones, nuclear-weapon-free zones, and zones of peace and co-operation are important means by which States try to exclude their regions from the arms race and to organize regional co-operation for the maintenance of peace and the promotion of co-operation and development. Therefore, it is important that all States respect the international instruments by which such zones are created.

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

Cameroon is pleased at the encouraging results of the second meeting of States of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic, held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 25 to 29 June this year.

Similarly, we hope that the Disarmament Commission's adoption by consensus of a document on the nuclear capability of South Africa during its last session will enable the First Committee to adopt by consensus during this session a set of recommendations on the effective implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, which was adopted in 1964 by the Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity.

For the sake of the common future of mankind, all nations - big and small, rich and poor - must spare no effort to bring about a more just and equitable new world order. In this context, the United Nations remains the melting-pot in which States can harmonize their positions and make joint efforts to meet the pressing challenges of today: peace, development and human rights, rights for which there must be equal respect throughout the world.

Mr. TADESSE (Ethiopia): At the outset, Sir, allow me to express our warm congratulations to you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee. Having witnessed the commendable manner in which you have led the deliberations of other important United Nations bodies, and being fully aware of your well-known qualities as an accomplished diplomat, we have no doubt that you will elevate the deliberations of our Committee to even higher planes. Let me also extend our felicitations to your colleagues, the other officers of the Committee, on their election. You can rest assured, Mr. Chairman, that you will enjoy the full support and co-operation of the Ethiopian delegation in all your undertakings.

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

As many of the speakers who have preceded me have observed, this meeting of the First Committee is taking place at a moment when the world is witnessing changes of an unprecedented nature. Indeed, our deliberations are being held at a time when the morphological structure of the international political system seems to have been altered beyond all recognition. Although the substantial impact of the changes on the democratization of international relations is yet to be fathomed, the relaxation of tension which has accompanied them augurs well for the maintenance of international peace and security. In the field of disarmament, the effect of these changes has been significant. The initiatives taken by the two leading Powers in the area of nuclear disarmament continue to generate hope for a more stable international order. In this respect it is with anticipation that we await the speedy conclusion of a START treaty and an agreement on conventional forces in Europe.

Although we are gratified by the turn of events which has contributed immensely to the prevalence of détente and a spirit of dialogue at the international level, we continue to harbour concerns relating to the remaining stockpiles of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the hands of a few States. We have yet to overcome the shock we sustained as a result of the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait. That flagrant violation of the basic norms of international law has once again revealed the precarious nature of the emerging order. While we find the overall situation of the present international political environment fairly reassuring, we cannot fail to recognize the dangers inherent in the residues and undercurrents of the past. Thus in the broad area of war and peace much remains to be done.

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

Among the most encouraging developments we have witnessed in the last few years has been the determination manifested by the international community in facing the challenges posed by chemical weapons. The protracted negotiations held at the Conference on Disarmament have reached a most decisive stage, in spite of some hurdles yet to be surmounted. It is essential that all States, especially those with significant stockpiles of such weapons, demonstrate the necessary political will to enable the multilateral disarmament forum to conclude its work on the long and eagerly awaited convention on the total ban of chemical weapons.

The collective effort of the international community to rid our planet of the scourge of nuclear war will remain futile unless and until meaningful negotiations are initiated on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. Much as we welcome the bilateral initiatives taken by the two leading Powers to reduce existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons, we shall persevere in our demand for a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. In this regard, we welcome the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban in the Conference on Disarmament, in spite of our dissatisfaction with the limited nature of its mandate. It is also our ardent hope that the amendment Conference of the partial test-ban Treaty, scheduled to be held in New York in January 1991, will contribute immensely to the universal effort aimed at the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

Ethiopia attaches paramount importance to the role that nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace play in the fields of the non-proliferation of weapons and confidence-building in various parts of the world. Throughout the years, Ethiopia has participated in the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean in the belief that the conversion of the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace would go a long way towards enhancing the prospects for peace and stability in the region. So far, the concerted effort made by the littoral and hinterland States to ensure the convening of the international Conference on the Indian Ocean has remained a distant hope owing to the apprehensions and misgivings that some maritime Powers have expressed regarding the validity of that forum. The most recent decision of some of those Powers to withdraw from the Ad Hoc Committee has added another dimension to the problem. We therefore appeal once again to those maritime Powers to reconsider their position and join us in our effort to establish a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean.

In my own continent, the lofty objectives enunciated in the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa have been undermined as a result of South Africa's acquisition of nuclear capability. In spite of the modest reforms that have taken place in that country, there are no indications that the racist régime in Pretoria has abandoned its policy of destabilization. Despite pronouncements containing promises, the Pretoria régime has yet to subject its nuclear facilities to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. It is therefore our considered view that all States should ensure the scrupulous observance of the arms embargo against the apartheid régime.

The well-established link between disarmament and development is a matter to which my country attaches the highest importance. It is morally repugnant that the

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

leading military Powers should spend the scarce resources of our planet on their nuclear arsenals in a world in which the majority are deprived of their right to shelter. It is indeed inconceivable that so many resources should be allocated to the refinement of nuclear warheads on a planet where many are grappling with the development of better seeds. It is equally regrettable that considerable sums should be invested in efforts aimed at the militarization of outer space at a time when many countries are endeavouring to combat desertification and the degradation of the environment. It is high time, therefore, that the resources that would be released by disarmament were channelled into ameliorating the sad economic plight of the developing countries.

Although we may be on different rungs of the ladder of development, the interdependence of our world compels us to perceive our existence in a unitary fashion. As we have often pointed out, our collective fate cannot and should not be left to the judgement of a few States. Especially in matters of disarmament and peace, the involvement of all States, large and small, is bound to contribute towards the universalization of commonly shared goals and to their attainment. In our pursuit of such goals, we must endeavour to enhance the role of the United Nations as the leading Organization capable of interpreting and equipped to interpret the genuine aspirations of the international community. Our success in this effort will very much determine our ability to survive as a family of nations. As a family of nations, we should act collectively in a manner that ensures our survival as inhabitants of the same planet.

Mr. NANDOE (Suriname): My delegation joins preceding speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. Our congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau. My

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

delegation assures you all of its co-operation in the discharge of your responsibilities.

Innumerable small, everyday and almost unnoticed changes have a way of undermining existing patterns of behaviour and belief, until a single event suddenly triggers far-reaching alterations in the lives of millions.

The Iraqi aggression against Kuwait was such an event. It struck when we were on the threshold of a new decade in a world already caught up in fundamental transition and transformation. The virtual end of the cold war had opened avenues to a constructive dialogue for arms control and disarmament, introducing a new phase in international relations in which attention could be concentrated on more pressing problems, such as economic and social development. However, the present tense and explosive situation in the Gulf, where the dangers of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons are looming, has, much to our distress, changed the expectations.

My delegation has always attached great significance to the maintenance of an effective mechanism for the prevention or control of the spread of nuclear weapons, and in particular to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, which we consider to be a major security arrangement for the entire international community.

Although the main responsibility for nuclear disarmament lies with the major nuclear-weapon Powers, all States should take part in efforts to eliminate those weapons. Nuclear-weapon States should accept the obligation to take positive and practical steps towards the adoption and implementation of concrete measures regarding nuclear disarmament. We therefore regret that the Fourth Review Conference could not reach a consensus on a formal document.

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

However, as many representatives have stated previously, basic features of the Treaty could be reaffirmed by the participants and we should therefore direct our future efforts in a positive spirit towards the strengthening of non-proliferation and encourage the accession of more countries to the non-proliferation Treaty. As we approach 1995, when a decision will have to be taken on whether the Treaty shall continue in force indefinitely or be extended for an additional fixed period, it is mandatory that a number of specific issues be tackled beforehand. In this respect, we welcome the decision of the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear-Test Ban.

There are well-established allegations that a number of countries possess a chemical-weapons capability with a destructive force that could be a military threat with a political impact. It is therefore regrettable that, although the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons was able to make progress on technical matters, on a number of political issues no agreement could be reached in order to arrive at a comprehensive chemical-weapons ban. It is of the utmost importance that the last remaining obstacles be removed so that an effective ban on the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons can be concluded during the next session of the Conference on Disarmament, in 1991.

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

It has long been a policy of our Organization that arms limitation and disarmament should apply not only to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction but also to conventional weapons. At the tenth special session some concrete suggestions were put forward - for example, those concerning the prevention of all forms of illegal trade in arms and those concerning an international register of arms sales and transfers.

As the Secretary-General indicates in his report, there exists the unfortunate possibility that significant arms reductions in one part of the world, owing to ongoing positive changes in the overall world situation, will be followed by the transfer of the resultant surplus weaponry to other parts of the planet. This would make our arms-reduction efforts an exercise in futility, as it would only result in arms redistribution.

My delegation therefore welcomes the Disarmament Commission's recommendations on ways of facilitating possible measures in the field of conventional-arms reduction, including measures to restrain international arms transfers. The initiative of a United Nations study on ways and means of promoting, on a universal and non-discriminatory basis, transparency in international transfers of conventional arms, is praiseworthy.

In this respect, we support the Secretary-General's suggestion that an international arms-transfer register be established as a step towards curbing the increasing illicit and covert trafficking in arms and as a means of averting their known, potentially negative, effects on the process of the peaceful social and economic development of peoples.

The recent resurgence of United Nations peace-keeping activity has brought a new challenge to our Organization. A careful analysis indicates that multilateral peace-keeping under United Nations auspices, although certainly no panacea, can be

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

more successful than unilateral efforts to defuse military and other conflicts. It is our view that peace-keeping operations work best if they are widely perceived as being impartial and, therefore, enjoy broad international support.

The Secretary-General, in his report, states:

"A deeper and more active involvement of the United Nations has over time, ... increasingly shown that peace-making itself determines, as it should, the size, scope and duration of peace-keeping as conventionally understood and that it is often by a fusion of the two in an integral undertaking that peace can genuinely be brought to troubled areas." (A/45/1, p. 4)

My delegation recommends that the United Nations peace-keeping system be streamlined and consolidated so that it can be used properly, not only in cases of military conflict but also in other situations.

As a party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, my country underlines the objectives established in the Declaration on the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic. The basic obligations of the States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco are: to use nuclear material and facilities exclusively for peaceful purposes; not to possess nuclear weapons; not to engage in or encourage any nuclear-weapon activities in the region; and not to permit the presence of any such weapons in their territories.

My country remains committed to the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to the strengthening of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The CHAIRMAN: I have received a request from the Observer of the Holy See, Archbishop Renato Raffaele Martino, to be allowed to make a statement. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Committee agrees to that request.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop MARTINO (Holy See): I wish to offer warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this important Committee, and I extend appreciation also to the other officers of the Committee and the Secretariat.

The deliberations of the Committee this year are taking place at a time of startling contrast.

The world rejoices at the end of the cold war, which had the effect, over more than four decades, of polarizing relations between East and West and leading to the biggest build-up of arms in the history of the world. The dismantling of the Berlin wall, the peaceful reunification of Germany, the sweep of freedom through Eastern Europe, and the reduction of armed forces in that area of the world, which has lived under militarism for too long, are all signs of the transformation in international relations. They are the signs of hope of a new era in which security will be found through the political co-operation of States rather than corrosive military confrontation.

Yet, at this very moment, the crisis in the Perisan Gulf has led to a massive build-up of armed forces that could result in a war of devastating proportions. The world is on edge - knowing that oppression must be stopped, but recognizing that recourse, once again, to military action would not address the roots of the problem. What must be addressed is the underlying crisis: the poverty and instability of so many countries; the competition for resources; the huge transfer of arms from the industrialized countries to the vulnerable regions. It is the United Nations that must address these problems if they are not to be subject to militarism, which would inevitably sink the world into armed camps. The Holy See cannot but share the conviction expressed by the Secretary-General,

(Archbishop Martino, Holy See)

Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, that common action to resolve disputes is preferable to action by individual States, which is always subject to "incoherence, dispersal and fragmentation in the peace effort". (A/45/1, p. 13) In that regard, the United Nations seems to be actually the most appropriate means of settling peacefully the too-numerous points of crisis and war that affect humanity.

The Gulf crisis is a reminder that the signs of danger must be heeded lest the gloss of post-cold-war peace turn out to be a veneer covering the militarism still deeply imbedded in the psyche of nations.

The Holy See appeals to nations to use this moment of hope to redouble efforts to ensure stability in the new era by rooting out the threats to world peace. Foremost among these threats is the continued modernization of nuclear weapons and the maintenance of the cold-war strategy of nuclear deterrence. The Holy See has frequently spoken on this question, reaffirming the stand taken by Pope John Paul II when he said:

> "Deterrence based on a balance of terror cannot be considered an end in itself, but only a stage towards progressive disarmament."

Nuclear deterrence can in no way be morally acceptable as a permanent policy.

(Archbishop Martino, Holy See)

I am happy to note that the representative of Ireland has spoken along the same lines, emphasizing the moral aspects of disarmament.

As the failed process of reviewing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in Geneva last month showed, there is growing resentment among non-nuclear States at the continued vertical nuclear-arms development by the nuclear States. The present nuclear-arms negotiations between the two major possessors, welcome and essential as they are, do not obscure the fact that the modernizing of nuclear weapons continues. That is why the Conference on amendment of the partial test-ban Treaty should be actively supported by all as a means of launching multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

The Holy See encourages a review of the strategy of nuclear deterrence at this hopeful moment; for surely the advances made in redefining their relationship open the way for the two major States to have a new ethical relationship. The willingness of many political leaders to take a positive step forward through the strengthening of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe as a viable forum for security, economic and environmental concerns opens up new possibilities for attaining common security.

This past decade has revealed the physical, security, economic and social connections that increasingly affect modern life. A new ethical view of nuclear deterrence should come from a greater recognition of what the "common ground" of our one planet means. The end of nuclear weapons will not leave us with a perfect world but will at least give the political order more room to deal with other imminent threats to peace caused by economic and social deprivation.

We recall the teaching of the Second Vatican Council that a universal public authority should be put in place to outlaw war. This goal requires broad and bold efforts to reinforce, or eventually to build, global institutions that can enable

(Archbishop Martino, Holy See)

all societies to be secure. International monitoring and enforcement, economic incentives for demilitarization and international legal procedures would play central roles in replacing deterrence by non-nuclear means. The signs of hope of the new era mean that the world community can start along that path.

This Committee can make an important contribution to the disarmament process by focusing global attention on the need for meaningful conventional disarmament, the successful conclusion of the long-standing negotiations on prohibition of the production of chemical weapons and the need to halt nuclear-weapon development.

The Holy See notes with appreciation the new reports that the Committee has received on nuclear weapons and the role of the United Nations in verification, along with the ideas put forward on strengthening the process of conversion from military spending to civilian production. A peace dividend for a world of great human need is now within reach, but more work is required to convince Governments that they make a greater contribution to true human security by spending on development rather than on arms. The world is moving swiftly, the signs of hope and the signs of danger intermingling in each newscast. Humanity craves the path of peace opened up by the immense amount of United Nations activity. We must work to ensure that the processes of militarism do not close that path.*

Mr. KOEFFLER (Austria): It is, of course, a great privilege to be speaking in this Committee after the Observer of the Holy See, and I take this opportunity to tell him that my delegation subscribes whole-heartedly to what has been said. We shall certainly follow his appeal to nations to work for the stability of the new era in order to root out the threats to peace. In this

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* Ms. Morris (Australia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Koeffler, Austria)

spirit, my delegation would like to complement our general statement of 16 October and make a few comments on chemical weapons, under agenda item 55.

A priority of Austria's disarmament policy is the earliest possible conclusion of a convention on chemical weapons, banning their development, production and stockpiling, as well as their use. To attain this goal we have been trying to make specific contributions to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons of the Conference on Disarmament. This year an Austrian scientific advisory council has begun work to promote research on verification conducive to the ongoing negotiations. In support of this, laboratory facilities have been established. A documentation centre on chemical weapons has been set up. Discussions are beginning in Austria on the establishment of a national authority under the convention.

These measures are intended to accelerate the negotiations in Geneva. At the same time they indicate our earnestness in offering the international community Vienna as the site for a future organization on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has worked very hard during 1990. We compliment Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden on his activities and on his dynamism. We appreciate his taking the initiative yesterday to brief this Committee on what is being done in Geneva.

Despite considerable progress on legal and technical issues such as the order of destruction of stocks of chemical weapons, dispute settlement and the investigation of alleged use, the much-hoped-for political breakthrough on key issues has not materialized.

Divergent views on politically sensitive questions remain unchanged. The most important ones are the conduct of challenge inspections, or inspections on request,

(Mr. Koeffler, Austria)

of the need for additional ad hoc inspections, the composition and decision-making of the organization's executive council, assistance and protection against chemical weapons, security stocks, measures to redress a situation and ensure compliance - the expression formerly used was "sanctions" - and economic and technological development, a theme to which my delegation attaches importance in view of the aspirations of developing countries.

(Mr. Koeffler, Austria)

Thus, in our opinion, the real differences are on the table. They can be tackled in concrete terms. They can be overcome by political compromise. The solution of these issues may secure undiminished security and universal adherence to the Convention. The step from deterrence to co-operative security can be made.

We welcome the agreement of 1 June this year between the United States and the Soviet Union on the destruction of a substantial part of their chemical weapons stockpiles. We share the commonly held view that this agreement should be used as a catalyst for a total ban on chemical weapons. We realize at this stage also that the rolling text on the subject of the order of destruction has benefited from the formulations in the bilateral agreement. Pending the entry into force of a complete ban, we support the position of the Netherlands that the authority of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to investigate the alleged use of chemical weapons should be strengthened.

Austria produces neither chemical weapons nor key precursors for a chemical-weapons capacity. We take part, however, in international efforts to control and monitor the increasing cross-boundary movement of key precursors. This international co-operation, however, can only be complementary to a chemical-weapons convention. Delegations here have spoken out vigorously for the early conclusion of a convention. Delegations have equally welcomed a meeting, at the ministerial level, at the Conference on Disarmament in 1991, well prepared and timed, to agree on a package solution. Austria joins these delegations.

In conclusion, we see no insurmountable problems in the negotiations if there is a willingness to compromise. Success is considered by the international public to be long overdue. It is an urgent necessity.

(Mr. Koeffler, Austria)

Austria will continue to work for a convention that is comprehensive in scope, one that provides for verification on the basis of an inspection régime upon request, universal and non-discriminatory. The year 1991 is the tenth anniversary of the negotiations on the global convention. We hope for a nice birthday party.

Mr. TAEB (Afghanistan): I am pleased to convey the congratulations of my delegation to Ambassador Rana and to his country, Nepal, a fellow member of the Asian Group, on his well-deserved election to preside over the work of the First Committee at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. We have full confidence that under his able guidance the work of the First Committee - in which a new spirit of co-operation and understanding has emerged - in the spheres of disarmament and security will be fruitful.

I wish also to express our felicitations to the other members of the Bureau on their election to serve the Committee under the chairmanship of Ambassador Rana.

The decade of the 1990s has made a good start. The cold war era is over. International relations are now taking a new course. The improvement of relations between the Soviet Union and the United States is making a great impact on the world political climate as a whole.

The ideal of the democratization of international relations and of every nation, a non-violent world, respect for the rule of law in solving problems between nations, and a balance of the legitimate interests of nations based on justice have permeated the minds of statesmen, parliamentarians, scientists and millions of people all over the world. A reversal of these positive tendencies would obviously be undesirable.

Since the meetings of the First Committee at the last session of the General Assembly, the international community has witnessed some momentous developments, such as the peaceful transformations in Europe, the reunification of Germany and of Yemen, the independence of Namibia and the continuation of the joint effort of the

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

United States and the Soviet Union to overcome their differences on a number of issues. Unfortunately, some regions still remain tense and explosive.

We express our deep concern with regard to the recent crises in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East. We sincerely hope that the explosive situation in those areas will be resolved by political means.

In our region, the military establishment of Pakistan, which in fact rules and controls the political life of that country, adhering to its traditional policy of interference and intervention in the internal affairs of its neighbours, remains a source of instability and tension.

Nuclear disarmament is at the top of the agenda we are discussing. The mass destructive power of nuclear explosives and their consequences need not be explored here. At the present time, according to a recent study of the United Nations, 50,000 nuclear warheads are deployed around the world. The United States and the Soviet Union possess more than 95 per cent of the existing nuclear weapons. Therefore, the two major nuclear Powers bear the main responsibility for saving civilization from a nuclear catastrophe that might occur even by a technical accident.

The United States-Soviet Union summit held in June and the follow-up ministerial meeting of the two countries have narrowed the gap and brought those countries closer to possible agreements in respect of conventional armed forces in Europe (CFE) and a reduction of their strategic nuclear weapons. We are encouraged by these developments and we hope that agreements on both questions will be concluded before the end of this year. We welcome the Protocols on Verification to the 1974 and 1976 Treaties, signed by President Bush and President Gorbachev during the June summit, which enabled Washington and Moscow to ratify the threshold Treaties. My delegation attaches great importance to legally binding assurances by

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

nuclear-weapon States on the non-use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is an important multilateral instrument that has served the cause of the nuclear disarmament process for many years. Regrettably, the Fourth Review Conference of the NPT could not produce a final declaration owing to the absence of consensus on some issues. While expressing our dissatisfaction, we generally consider the outcome of the Conference to represent net progress on a number of aspects of the NPT régime.

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

It is worth mentioning that consensus has been reached on some key elements relating to safeguards and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as well as, to some extent, on negative security assurances.

A comprehensive nuclear-weapon-test ban is essential to prevent the escalation of the nuclear-arms race to new qualitative dimensions and to strengthen the NPT régime. In this connection, we have heard the view that a comprehensive nuclear-weapon-test ban is a long-term goal. My delegation cannot understand how we should interpret "long-term goal". Do some of us still want a green light to produce new and more advanced weapons of mass destruction and achieve military superiority? Do the nuclear-weapon States consider that their present nuclear arsenals are not sufficient to meet their defensive needs or, perhaps, their offensive doctrine? If the answer is yes, then one may ask what the purpose is of the hard, tough negotiations on the limitation or elimination of nuclear arsenals if we do not want to halt the production of new ones. Maybe some of us are trying deliberately to mislead the world public by destroying outdated nuclear weapons while intending to replace them with new, advanced classes of such weapons. My delegation sees no other explanation.

We believe that these are some of the questions that must be addressed early next year at the Conference on the amendment of the partial test-ban Treaty. We hope that the States parties to the Moscow Treaty of 1963 will be able to overcome the difficulties and will make every effort to achieve a consensus on a comprehensive nuclear-weapon-test ban treaty at the forthcoming Conference in New York.

My delegation consistently supports the efforts aimed at establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in different regions of the world as an integral part of global nuclear disarmament. However, we note with concern that the nuclear capability of the racist régime of South Africa, the Zionist régime of Israel and

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

some others stands in the way of the process of denuclearization in various parts of the world.

My delegation's position with regard to the draft resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, proposed by Pakistan, is clear. We have serious misgivings about the ill intentions and double-standard approach of its sponsor, Pakistan. The Pakistani delegation tries, by proposing the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, to divert the attention of the world community from Pakistan's continuing attempts to obtain facilities capable of producing nuclear weapons. The recent investigation by the United States authorities, which was revealed to the world public by the mass media, once again clearly proved the intention of the Pakistan authorities to acquire nuclear weapons. For this reason, Pakistan continues to refuse to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty. We call on the international community to exert on Pakistan pressure similar to that exerted on South Africa and Israel in order to stop its plan to produce nuclear weapons. Pakistan should make an unambiguous commitment to the international community by acceding to the NPT and accepting International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards on its nuclear programme.

The delegation of the Republic of Afghanistan welcomes the steps taken by the United States and the Soviet Union with regard to chemical weapons. The Soviet-American bilateral agreements on the destruction and non-production of chemical weapons and on measures to facilitate the conclusion of a multilateral convention banning chemical weapons, which were signed in June 1990, should contribute greatly to the conclusion of a multilateral convention at the Conference on Disarmament in the near future.

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

We urge the Conference on Disarmament to speed up its work on the completion of the convention on chemical weapons. We fully share the view expressed by the majority of States that the chemical-weapons convention must be comprehensive, verifiable and universal. There must be no conditions that postpone the decision on the total elimination of chemical weapons and its full implementation.

We take note of the progress in negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures and on the reduction of conventional armed forces in Europe. It appears that there is a good possibility of concluding an agreement on conventional armed forces in Europe and completing a new set of confidence- and security-building measures in the near future.

My Government's position with regard to outer space is consistent and clear. We categorically oppose the militarization of outer space as a result of scientific discoveries in the field of armaments. Outer space should be used exclusively for the peaceful purposes of mankind.

Nearly all developing countries have no capability to manufacture arms and munitions. To satisfy their defence needs, they are dependent on the major arms-exporting States. Consideration of the issue of arms transfers covering a variety of transactions that in many cases impose serious problems on national sovereignty, internal and regional stability and socio-economic development, particularly in developing countries, raises some delicate questions, one of them being who should make decisions on the quality and quantity of the military needs of a sovereign State, and how. We believe there is need for deep and thorough study of the issue in all its aspects.

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

In its statement last year in the First Committee, my delegation elaborated on one aspect of international arms transfer and its consequences, based on our region's experience. In fact, it is the illegal trafficking and delivery of different types of weapons, including very sophisticated and destructive ones, to irresponsible anti-Government groupings which is destabilizing the situation not only of Member States but of entire regions.

Regrettably, I have to inform the Committee that the military establishment of Pakistan has turned the territory of that country into a place where extremist elements and anti-Government groupings from neighbouring countries are purposely trained, armed, equipped and financed for the destabilization of Afghanistan and India. Continuous violations of the Geneva agreements by Pakistan are so obvious that they need no elaboration. The flow of arms supplies continues to reach Pakistani soil, where the weapons are distributed to the extremist elements of neighbouring States, mainly by the inter-service intelligence of Pakistan.

My delegation expresses its support for the proposal by the Soviet Union on registration within the United Nations system of international arms sales and transfers, and recommends the Organization to undertake a comprehensive study of all aspects of the issue.

My delegation once more stresses the importance of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace and of its implementation. We note that significant progress has been made by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean on the preparatory work for the Colombo Conference, in particular the completion of its draft agenda, during the 1990 sessions. We call on all delegations to redouble their efforts and demonstrate the necessary political will in order to facilitate the convening of the Conference on the Indian Ocean in Colombo in 1991.

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

My delegation appreciates the progress made by the Disarmament Commission during its substantive session this year. The General Assembly, by adopting resolution 44/119 C, contributed significantly to enhancing the effective role of the Commission through rationalization of its work. We take note of the positive outcome of the work of the Commission on some issues on its agenda, as reflected in its report (A/45/42).

My delegation attaches particular importance to the work of the Conference on Disarmament, the only multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament issues. We welcome the decision of the Conference on Disarmament on the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. We hope that the Ad Hoc Committee will start its substantive work on this important issue next year.

Finally, my delegation would like to express its thanks and admiration to the United Nations for its outstanding role in the field of disarmament, and in particular to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Mr. Sohrab Kheradi, Secretary of the Committee, and their staff in the Department for Disarmament Affairs for their tireless efforts.

Mr. KATSIGAZI (Uganda): Allow me to start by expressing my delegation's delight that Mr. Jai Pratap Rana of Nepal is our Chairman and is guiding the deliberations of the First Committee in this important post-cold-war session of the United Nations General Assembly. His personal qualities of patience and skilful diplomacy will, I am sure, lead to the successful conclusion of our work. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their well-deserved election.

For the last couple of years our statements in the First Committee and the plenary meetings of the General Assembly have been embellished with expressions of hope, as the level of understanding and co-operation between the two super-Powers

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has begun to rise. We have welcomed their bilateral initiatives on destroying or reducing some of the weapons of mass destruction which threaten the very existence of the human race. But now we have gone beyond mere expressions of hope; monumental events have taken place.

The Berlin Wall came crumbling down at this time last year. The principal protagonists in the world divided into East and West have declared that they no longer consider themselves to be adversaries. They have declared the end of the cold war. We now talk of positive changes in the international political arena. However, pertinent questions are being asked about what these changes will mean for the citizens of the world. Will they mean that nations will truly come together and seek collective solutions to the ills of the world? President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda asked the same questions when he was addressing the Royal Institute of International Affairs - Chatham House - in London on 27 September 1990. He asked:

> "Where do the current changes in the world leave the third world? It is now being said that the second world has joined the first world. How will this affect Africa? There are two possible effects. The developing consensus among the two super-Powers and the anticipated peace dividend may liberate resources that can help the underdeveloped countries in Africa and other backward areas of the world. Alternatively, some interests in the industrialized countries may take the view that the backward countries of the world now have fewer options and may become less accommodative of the idiosyncrasies of the latter. The peace dividend may not easily materialize for the simple reason that conflicts may outlive the bipolar world of the West and the Soviet Union. In other words, accommodation between the capitalist and socialist camps may not bring the anticipated peace. This is already happening in the Persian Gulf. This further reveals the falsehood of the

(Mr. Katsigazi, Uganda)

conception that interests that caused polarization and conflicts in the past were only those of the big Powers. It will become more and more apparent that the present international situation has been, for some time, characterized by a myriad of interests that must be accommodated in a just manner if we are to enjoy universal peace.

"If, on the other hand, the industrialized Powers become more arrogant vis-à-vis the backward countries on the understanding that the latter have few options open to them now, this may create new problems for world peace."

It is clear from the foregoing that in the post-cold-war era we have to focus on the burning issue of the technology gap between the developed North and the developing South. We have to stop and reverse the current situation, in which resources flow from South to North. Africa's external debt stock today is upwards of $260 billion. This figure represents 328.4 per cent of the continent's total gross domestic product. As Susan George argues in her book A Fate Worse Than Debt, these massive transfers from South to North are simply wrong; the North has to recognize that trade surpluses eked out by the South under present conditions cannot go on for ever. The food riots which we hear are taking place in various capitals in the South are the outcome of the harsh policies of structural adjustment dictated by the Bretton Woods institutions to squeeze payments of interest on external debt by the poor countries in the South. The effect of these riots is that Governments spend large sums on armaments to contain them. This makes essential services - schools, health clinics, immunization programmes, safe water projects, and so on - suffer, as resources are diverted to maintain law and order.

During the thick of the cold war certain nuclear-weapon States adopted military postures and doctrines which, viewed now in the post-cold-war period, were

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unsaleable. That the United States and the Soviet Union have declared themselves no longer adversaries renders such doctrines highly questionable.

In his report to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly the Secretary-General rightly observes that we are in a period

> "in which political developments have fast overtaken the cautious pace ... to limit arms and armaments. The doctrines which dominated military thought and planning throughout the decades following the Second World War have suddenly lost their relevance and applicability. Appropriate security structures need to be found to replace the adversarial strategies of the past". (A/45/1, pp. 17, 18)

The continued position of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that nuclear weapons are indispensable to a State's security against conventional attack simply incites and invites more and more States to seek to acquire them. This undermines the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is high time Britain and the United States adopted the doctrine of "no first use" and moved without further delay to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty with other nuclear Powers.

It is the hope of my delegation that when the partial test-ban amendment Conference convenes in New York in January 1991 the three depositary Governments will be positive and demonstrate their full support for efforts to achieve a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty before 1995. It is important, in the view of my delegation, that the right mood be created at the January 1991 Conference. If an objective post mortem on why it was not possible to agree on a final declaration at the end of the Fourth Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons last month in Geneva is carried out by the three depositary Governments and the mood of the majority of members parties to the

(Mr. Katsigazi, Uganda)

Treaty is carefully examined, my delegation is pretty sure that a positive outcome of the 1995 non-proliferation Treaty extension Conference can be expected.

At this time last year we were all hopeful that, following the January 1989 Paris Conference on chemical weapons, a strong momentum had been generated to hasten the conclusion of a draft convention prohibiting the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. We are now disappointed to learn from the report of the Conference on Disarmament that some issues still remain controversial and the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has thus slowed down.

(Mr. Katsigazi, Uganda)

In order for the Ad Hoc Committee to be reactivated, there must be flexibility and compromise in the negotiations. Furthermore, those who possess chemical weapons should take bold steps to destroy all their stocks, without insisting that they should keep small quantities until all States with a chemical-weapon capability adhere to the convention. In a world otherwise free of chemical weapons, any chemical-weapon State itching to manufacture them would be easily isolated and subjected to legitimate international and diplomatic pressure. In a situation where there were strictly no nuclear or chemical weapons, few nations would want to be the first to produce them again.

South Africa's continuing nuclear weapons programmes, which have the full collaboration of some Member States, remain a matter of grave concern to my delegation. In August 1988, the Foreign Minister of South Africa stated publicly that his country had nuclear capability and could produce nuclear weapons if it wanted. This open admission by a Cabinet Minister, and several attempts by South African agents to steal technical devices needed to produce nuclear weapons, prompted this Committee to put forward what became resolution 44/113 B of 15 December 1989. Regrettably, the report of the Secretary-General called for in that resolution has not yet come out; we hope that when it finally does so, it will unambiguously expose those who have helped the racist régime produce missiles with nuclear warheads.

In the mean time, pressure must be kept up for South Africa to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to place all its nuclear installations under full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, and it should do so with no preconditions. My delegation totally rejects the preconditions set by the racist régime that it would be willing to accede to the NPT but only in the context of an equal commitment by other States in

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the southern African region. Putting the racist régime on an equal footing with the other States in the region, while calling upon those other States to accede to the NPT at the same time, is a negation of those States' well-known and principled stand against the policy of apartheid. South Africa's nuclear weapons programme - which it is clear exists - is aimed at entrenching apartheid, destabilizing the front-line States and frustrating the 1964 Cairo Declaration of African Heads of State and Government on the denuclearization of Africa.

Wars of aggression and destabilization, including proxy wars, sponsored by the apartheid régime against members of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) in the years 1980 to 1988 cost SADCC member States the staggering sum of $60 billion, close to $10 billion per annum. This is twice the annual gross domestic product of the entire subregion, whether expressed in the form of grants, soft loans, export credits or commercial loans per annum. The extent of the human cost and suffering cannot be measured; close to 1.5 million lives were lost in the process, and half of them were children's. With this picture of excruciating loss, how can any upright person call in the same breath on racist South Africa and the front-line States to accede to the NPT at the same time? My delegation is of the view that if any Member of the front-line States wishes to accede to the NPT, it should do so at its own pace and leisure.

Nuclear-free zones are very important building blocks in constructing a strong nuclear non-proliferation régime. We support the zones which have been created, and those which Member States have indicated they wish to create. The view of my delegation is that in creating the nuclear-free zones, the security interests of the States in a given region should be the determining factor.

Efforts to turn the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace have dragged on for years because extra-regional States have shown a total disregard for the interests

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of the States in the region. In the case of Africa, as I have said, South Africa has been used by outside forces to frustrate the legitimate aspirations of the people of Africa to keep their continent free of nuclear weapons in accordance with the 1964 Cairo Declaration. My delegation would like to see serious, specific steps taken to implement that Declaration, and we therefore call on the United Nations to make the necessary resources available to enable the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to hold a meeting of experts in Addis Ababa in 1991 to start work on implementing the 1964 Cairo Declaration.

Peace and development are inseparable. Where peace prevails, resources are devoted to socio-economic development. As a practical measure, we have re-examined the mandates of our regional and subregional structures to see how, in the changing circumstances, they can be used to contribute to the peaceful resolution of conflicts. In this way, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is currently engaged in the process of finding a peaceful solution to the tragic conflict in Liberia. My delegation wishes to appeal to the international community to support ECOWAS in this noble cause.

In my own subregion of eastern Africa, the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), which groups together the States of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda to tackle issues of agriculture, food security, drought, environmental protection and development, has changed its character and added to its mandate a new role, that of promoting peace, security and stability in this conflict-ridden area, the Horn of Africa. The new role of IGADD as a catalyst for peace is reflected in document A/45/410.

These developments clearly demonstrate that confidence-building measures are gaining ground and are increasingly being appreciated as viable means for promoting peace. They deserve our total support. We also recognize the invaluable

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contribution of the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and in Asia and the Pacific, and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean in the development of confidence-building measures. They too must have the encouragement and support they need from us.

My delegation would like to express its deep appreciation of the Department for Disarmament Affairs for its dedication to the cause of peace and disarmament.

Mr. MARTYNOV (Byelorussian SSR) (interpretation from Russian): We understand that delegations' patience is not unlimited on a Friday afternoon; however, we do hope that enough patience does remain for them to listen to our statement.

Today I would like to explain our views on the question of the impact of the military use of recent achievements in science and technology on international security. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR has been devoting a significant amount of effort to this issue for about ten years now. Thus, it was as long ago as 1982 that the General Assembly adopted resolution 37/77 B, proposed by the Byelorussian SSR, which formulated the problem of the renunciation of the use of new discoveries and scientific and technological achievements for military purposes in as general terms as possible, and which was perhaps before its time. That resolution was not built on further, owing to the apparent lack of readiness on the part of many States to tackle a problem of that kind. We nevertheless kept on bringing up the matter in our statements to the General Assembly and in letters on the subject we addressed to the Secretary-General, and also to other forums.

I can say quite sincerely that for a number of years our delegation, as far as this issue was concerned, has not had the feeling that it is a voice crying in the wilderness. Our satisfaction is therefore that much greater when we see that the appreciation States have of the importance of this problem has begun to change, and

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now, as many of the statements we have heard in this discussion show, a great deal of attention is being given to it. We are convinced that in years to come, the world community will have to develop and agree on specific measures putting limits on the most dangerous trends in the military use of the latest achievements of science and technology.

The reason for this can be found in real life. The internal dynamics of the arms race at the present time have undergone substantive changes in recent years. One can say, with some degree of confidence, that the arms race now is primarily qualitative in nature.

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Furthermore, this feature has already become characteristic of many regions where tensions exist and there is military rivalry. The data cited in the yearbooks of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) reaffirm an accelerated growth in the 1980s of expenditure for military research and development. In the work of scientists and experts in this area today there are already long-range plans to ensure the continuation of this trend. Despite all the different views expressed on the subject, the changes in military technology - both the present changes and the expected ones - will have the most serious impact on the security situation, changing ways and methods for carrying out military actions and the very nature of potential military clashes and thereby undermining predictability and stability.

The unlimited qualitative development of weapons is creating a situation of uncertainty and is arousing an increased sense of threat, which in turn can lead to a renewal of tensions. A trend is thus generated that counteracts the present positive changes in the international situation. All this can have a negative effect on efforts in the disarmament field and on the course of present negotiations and the outcome of future negotiations.

For a number of reasons, a new category of weapons with increased mobility, dual functions, opportunities for concealment, a reduction in dimensions, and so forth, as a rule significantly complicate the problem of verification comparison. It becomes objectively more difficult to limit and to eliminate them.

In addition, for various reasons it has become more difficult politically to make new types of weapons the object of negotiations. They are "protected" by the kind of inertia inherent in recently adopted decisions. This is most clearly expressed by interest groups that do not fully recover the expenditure for research and development - and for modern weapons systems this means increasingly greater

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sums. The development of a number of types of weapons designed to reduce the possibility of defence against such systems leads directly to the erosion of stability and predictability.

In the context of the erosion of predictability and verification possibilities, one source of alarm is the recent report concerning the newest type of technology that can ensure virtually full concealment from all means of radar and tracking.

Furthermore, that factor and the growth of the destructive force and lethal nature of weapons in themselves also make more onerous the consequences of their use, including accidental or unauthorized use, which in turn renders more difficult the possibilities for a balanced and adequate reaction to such use and reduces the possibility of preventing a situation of serious tension from turning into a large-scale or global conflict.

The ever-growing degree of the computerization of new weapons systems creates the threat of the loss of control at a critical moment as a result of the transfer of important control functions to artificial-intelligence systems.

The constellation of threats arising from present capabilities in genetic engineering, biotechnology and bacteriological (biological) weapons, and their impact on genetic mechanisms have, in addition to purely military consequences, most serious humanitarian ones. In addition, we cannot disregard the particular danger of the potential use of such means for terrorist purposes.

With this clearly expressed trend, the significant reduction in the time of delivery of warheads to a target provided by the newest categories of delivery vehicles severely limits the possibility for careful analysis of such a threat and

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the taking of a balanced decision, thus increasing the risk of an unforeseen development of events.

One of the important trends is the growth of strike accuracy and, combined with the enhancement of destructive capability, this ensures the destruction of targets which formerly could be ensured only through the use of nuclear weapons. Moreover, unlike the latter, this provides the possibility of selective strikes.

Operational possibilities of a new generation of weapons are drastically increased by combining them into large-scale systems that function in a maximally co-ordinated way. This is done on the basis of the newest combined radar systems for locating targets for attack, together with sophisticated computer systems for command, control and communications. With the use of appropriate delivery vehicles and new types of conventional weapons and systems for their control, there has been an unprecedented expansion of the geographical boundaries for conducting military operations.

Finally, the new possibilities given to weapons systems has resulted in the emergence of new methods, and consequently doctrines, for carrying out military operations owing to the fact that certain new technological weapons are showing a clear trend towards the domination of such attack characteristics or dual possibilities for use, and new methods for military actions are leading at the very least to the erosion of boundaries between defence and offence. Therefore the basis for the creation and implementation on a practical plane of promising concepts for the strengthening of international peace and security and the transition to genuine disarmament is being undermined - concepts such as reasonable defence sufficiency, a purely defensive structure of military forces, and non-threatening defence. Weapons are now being given new characteristics, on a

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qualitatively different level. This is not a limited, but a recurring phenomenon, encompassing virtually all categories of weapons.

Dizzying scientific technological progress is fraught with the danger of the creation of new types of weapons of mass destruction. That was considered as a real possibility by the international community more than 40 years ago. This is attested to by the definition of new types of weapons of mass destruction adopted in 1948 by the Commission on Conventional Weapons then operating in the United Nations.

Now, more than ever before, we cannot close our eyes to this problem. The problem of banning the development and production of new types of weapons of mass destruction is also particularly relevant because in the area of real disarmament there has already been genuine progress; there are clear signs of it. In fact, while intensive efforts are being made to eliminate nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and radiological weapons, it would be unreasonable - to say the least - to leave the door open for the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction. That view, which is relevant today, will be doubly relevant to a non-nuclear and non-violent world. The building of such a world is a goal shared by a very wide range of States. A situation is possible in which there would be movement towards increasingly smaller - down to zero - levels of existing weapons of mass destruction as a result of scientific discoveries or technological achievements. There may be a dangerous intention drastically to tip the military strategic balance, including on a regional level, through the acquisition of new means of mass destruction that are inaccessable, and will be so at least for a certain period, to other parties.

Furthermore, the creation of new types of weapons of mass destruction may seem to be rather attractive from the point of view of military stereotypes if such

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weapons turn out to be less costly, more easily deliverable to the target and also more capable of destroying human resources of the adversary, with fewer and fewer long-lasting consequences for the material resources and the environment, than nuclear weapons, for example. The non-nuclear nature of such weapons may also make it seem more acceptable on a moral and political level than nuclear weapons. The last of these factors will lead to a reduction of the threshold for unleashing war in particular regional conflicts with the use of weapons of mass destruction.

As is well known, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic for a number of years has been working towards the consolidation of the efforts of States to develop international procedures for carrying out the timely control of the development of new types of potential weapons of mass destruction. To this end the General Assembly has already adopted a number of draft resolutions submitted by the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. We intend once again to submit an appropriate draft resolution to the General Assembly on this matter.

In summarizing this brief survey, we should list the following among the number of possible and predictable adverse effects of the development of new technologies and types of weapons: a reduction in the threshold level of global military conflict, a new type of arms race, difficulties in ensuring means of verification and of compliance with agreements, and an increase in the gap between the development of military technology and the strengthening of international efforts to eliminate weapons. A singular feature resulting from such qualitative and profound changes in the area of military technology is the danger of the erosion of strategic stability. It is clear that in such conditions the international community cannot fail to look ahead; it cannot disregard the qualitative aspect of the transformation of weapons; it cannot maintain in this area the significant gap in its co-ordinated efforts in the disarmament field.

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The task of drawing up and agreeing, at the international level, on measures to limit or halt the use of new scientific and technological developments for the creation of weapons is extraordinarily complex for both technical and political reasons. Here we need to be clearly aware of this. The complexity is obvious, but it can be successfully reduced, as can the difficulties of achieving agreement on the qualitative and quantitative reduction of weapons. The difficult nature of the goal, the complexity of possible measures and the lack, at the present stage, of sufficient international agreement concerning the role of the qualitative factor in the arms race clearly show the need for a preliminary international study of this problem in a broad context. Such a study should promote greater understanding of the nature of the impact of the qualitative transformation of weapons on international security, should define possible areas for appropriate action on the part of the international community and, what is very important, should disseminate, at the international level, knowledge concerning this aspect of the arms race. In any case, it is clear that not all areas of the use of scientific and technical achievements for military purposes should be banned or limited. Some of them can have a rather positive impact on stability - for example, the improvement of technical means of verification, communication, warning and so forth. Therefore, it would be useful, on the one hand, and dangerous on the other, to define acceptable areas of scientific and technical progress in the military sphere. This in itself would mark an important step.

A fundamentally important element in the problem under consideration is the need for a preventive approach. It is hardly reasonable to wait until some new kind of weapon takes its place in military arsenals. The experience of all of us over past decades has demonstrated that it is significantly more difficult to

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eliminate existing weapons than to come to an agreement on the prevention of the creation of new ones. Moreover, the preventive approach does not rule out the possibility of identifying weapons to a sufficient degree of accuracy for purposes of agreement.

The Byelorussian SSR is the initial sponsor of two resolutions adopted at the forty-third and forty-fourth sessions of the General Assembly - resolutions 43/77 A and 44/118 A - which were introduced by India and which charged the Secretary-General to follow, with the assistance of qualified consultant experts, scientific and technological developments, especially those which have potential military applications, and to evaluate their impact on international security. The recently published report of the Secretary-General (A/45/568) on this issue is of significant interest and requires further time for study.

We hope that the efforts undertaken will allow us to go in this problem in greater depth and expand the sphere of agreement. The Conference held this year by the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs in Sendai in Japan should also serve these goals.

In conclusion, the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR would like to note that effective steps in the area of preventing the creation of new and dangerous types of weapons in addition to a significant strengthening of international security in its military aspect will play a major role in another important dimension as well. They will promote efforts to create and use promising sophisticated technology, which at present is to a significant extent military in nature, towards goals of development, a decision to promote the expansion of international co-operation to the noble goals of global and universal human problems.

The CHAIRMAN: I have received requests from delegations to speak in exercise of the right of reply. Before calling on them, I should like to recall

(The Chairman)

the procedures agreed to at a previous meeting. The number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting shall be limited to two per item. The first intervention in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation and on any item at a given meeting shall be limited to 10 minutes and the second one to five minutes.

I now call on the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan): We have been astonished to hear the statement made by the representative of the Kabul régime speaking in the name of Afghanistan in which he has made wild references to my country. Here is the representative of a régime foisted on a decent people by force of bayonets, foreign bayonets at that, responsible for one of the greatest tragedies of our time, whose hands are bloody with the deaths of 1.5 million of his own compatriots and countless others maimed and tortured, with a third of its population sitting outside his own country in neighbouring Iran and Pakistan, 5 million to be exact, and another 2 million displaced within his own country, having been forced to abandon their hearths and homes. This representative has the temerity to lecture us on disarmament.

He has referred in the first place to some self-perceived military establishment of Pakistan that in fact rules and controls the political life of the country, this two days after national elections in Pakistan freely observed by 4,000 impartial journalists and foreign observers, who have attested to the fairness of the elections.

He has then spoken about our proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, a proposal which has been endorsed by the vast majority of the members of this Committee and of the General Assembly. Pakistan has reaffirmed time and again, and at all levels, the rationale of its proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free

(Mr. Kamal, Pakistan)

zone as it has also attested to its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We are committed to these peaceful uses of nuclear energy, but we believe - as do many other countries - that Pakistan has the right to develop its peaceful nuclear programme and should have access to, and be free to acquire, nuclear technology, materials and equipment for this purpose. This right, might I remind the representative of the Kabul régime, has been unambiguously affirmed by the General Assembly in its resolution 32/50.

In the third place, he has made reference to Pakistan having turned the territory of its country into a place where extremist elements and empty Government groupings from neighbouring countries are purposely trained, armed, equipped and financed for the destabilization of neighbours.

Pakistan, unlike Afghanistan, is a free and open society. Diplomats, journalists, observers are all free to move around to see and judge for themselves. None of them has seen evidence of the type fantasized by the representative of the Kabul régime.

He has then spoken of continuous violations of the Geneva Agreements which, he says, are so obvious that they need no elaboration. All of us know that the Geneva Agreements addressed only the external aspects of the situation in Afghanistan.

(Mr. Kamal, Pakistan)

The internal aspects of the situation have been, and are, for the people of Afghanistan themselves to judge and decide upon. To begin with, the people of Afghanistan have voted with their feet. As I have said, 5 million of them have moved out of their country and voted by being present in Iran and Pakistan. Secondly, rectification of the internal situation depends on the formation of a broad-based Government, foreseen by resolutions of the General Assembly, adopted by consensus over the past two years, specifically calling for the formation of a broad-based Government. The quicker the régime in Kabul recognizes that fact and hands over power to a broad-based Government, the quicker peace will return to an unfortunate country and a noble people.

May I end by sharing with the Committee our pain over the events in Afghanistan. No amount of wild allegations and efforts to externalize the problems can conceal the conditions inside the country nor disguise the terror that a régime disavowed and rejected by its own people has wrought on a law-abiding, peaceful, and noble population.

Mr. TAEB (Afghanistan): My delegation had no intention of speaking at this late hour, but is doing so because the representative of the military circle of Pakistan made irresponsible, slanderous and baseless allegations. He repeated - and I give him credit for perhaps being a good poet - outdated allegations that are in contradiction of the ongoing reality in my country as well as of the present international climate.

For the record, I should like to make the following remarks.

The representative of Pakistan described his country as having a democratic and open society. In that regard I should say that almost since its emergence on the world map Pakistan has been ruled by the military establishment. The names of Marshal Ayub Khan, General Yahya Khan and General Zia-ul-Haq as the military rulers

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

of that country are familiar to all. There is no doubt about it. Equally, the situation in that country today and the role of General Aslam Big, the Chief of Staff, is obvious to all, including Ambassador Kamal. The role of Pakistan's military system in the tension in our region from the 1950s to the present day has been so clear that there is no need for elaboration.

The representative of the military circle of Pakistan reacted to my statement, in which I mentioned Pakistan's continuing interference and intervention in the internal affairs of my country, Pakistan's continued blatant violation of the Geneva Agreements, and Pakistan's attempts to make a nuclear weapon. The representative of Pakistan tried by his fabrications to mislead the world community once again and draw attention away from what Pakistan is really doing, with its negative impact on regional and international security.

My delegation wishes to draw attention to Pakistan's intention and policy in regard to Afghanistan. This is best done by referring to a secret document obtained by my country at the beginning of this year, a document prepared for the Pakistan Government by the head of Inter-Service Intelligence, famous as the ISI. It is addressed to the late military ruler, General Zia-ul-Haq. Pakistan's plans and intentions are revealed in the following words:

"it is imperative that Pakistan should set up a confederation with Afghanistan. This may be done under the banner of rallying Islamic countries for the sake of peace, security and stability in the region ...

"All pre-conditions are available to perpetrate this idea. Leaders of the seven-party alliance depend fully upon us. Some of them have been working with us and have pledged their firm support ...

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

"We must promote the mujahideen's complete victory. Pakistan must render all possible military and political aid to the seven-party alliance and above all to basic Hekmatyar grouping which is especially influential, powerful and reliable."

Here I should like to read another quotation related to Pakistan's nuclear programme, where the same intentions towards Afghanistan are revealed:

"Within the framework of this confederation frontiers must be abolished and a common economic structure established. This will permit access to Afghan uranium fields and will make our nuclear programme virtually independent from foreign suppliers."

I shall give the representative of Pakistan a copy of this document so that he may thoroughly examine it.

The military establishment of Pakistan does not want to accept the defeat of its plans, which have included attacks on Jalalabad and Khost, the abortive coup and the recent failed attack on Kabul. It is continuing its futile attempt to achieve its real aim, which is incapable of accomplishment.

I would stress that Pakistan's attempt to obtain facilities for the manufacture of nuclear weapons is not fresh news for the world's public; it goes back to the early 1970s. During the 1980s the United States Government waived the application of its law prohibiting the provision of United States military and economic aid to countries with a nuclear programme that involved attempts to obtain the capability to produce nuclear weapons. It did so because of its super-Power rivalry and military confrontation in the region.

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

I should like to quote the following from an article published recently - on 10 October - in The Washington Post, which revealed information in documents now at the disposal of the United States Government and Congress:

> "Pakistan, working through its Embassy in France and intermediaries in Canada and Switzerland, tried at least three times this year to buy American-made high-temperature furnaces that can be used in manufacturing nuclear weapons, according to documents furnished yesterday to Administration officials and congressional investigators".

In another part of the article it is stressed that

> "Pakistan has steadfastly denied for years that it possesses nuclear weapons or maintains a nuclear-weapons programme. But Administration officials and lawmakers are now greeting these assurances with greater disbelief".

And all of this comes from a traditional ally of Pakistan, which has now reached the aforementioned conclusion in this regard.

I should like to emphasize in this respect that the newspaper correspondent tried to obtain some response from officials of the Pakistani Government in Washington, D.C., but, as he said in the article,

> "No one was available at the Pakistani Embassy here to comment on Pakistan's efforts to buy furnaces".

This means that they had no intention of saying anything on the matter.

With regard to what has been said about democracy and the democratic society of Pakistan, I must stress that Pakistan has never been a democratic society and still is not a democratic society. Let us see if Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan will try to deny this. I should like to remind him that his direct boss is a general who long ago put his uniform away in a closet and took up his new post as Foreign Minister. Since the times of General Zia, he has avoided calling himself "General". That has been his clear intention.

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

When the Government of Benazir Bhutto was elected two years ago, that General, Yakub-Khan, was a part of the deal with the military establishment that removed the Bhutto Government some months ago.

With regard to my country, I am sure that the representative of the military establishment of Pakistan is aware that in the Republic of Afghanistan the government system is functioning in accordance with the Constitution and other national laws. He knows that the President of the country was elected by the highest legislative body, the Loya Jirga; that the Parliament of the country is functioning; and that the present Government - headed by Mr. Khaliqyar and composed mostly of non-party and independent personalities - received a vote of confidence in Parliament last May. The representative of Pakistan has no right to lecture us about democracy.

We recognize that we have problems with our opposition. But the Government has made a number of proposals for solving these problems through peaceful means, including dialogue and elections supervised by the United Nations. If the Pakistani representative challenges that, we are ready to defend the sincerity of these proposals.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Pakistan, who wishes to speak a second time in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan): At this late hour, I would not wish to prolong your agony, Sir, which is indeed the agony of us all. The judgement on the remarks made by the representative of the Kabul régime will not ultimately be given either by you or by the rest of us here. That judgement will be given by the people of Afghanistan themselves. Unfortunately, 1.5 million of them are dead and cannot be brought back to life. But the remaining 5 million, who are in Iran and Pakistan, have already given that judgement. We in Pakistan would welcome their return to Afghanistan in conditions of dignity and safety and honour. When that day comes,

(Mr. Kamal, Pakistan)

we shall thereafter happily accept the credibility of the comments and views of the representatives of Afghanistan.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Afghanistan, who wishes to speak a second time in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. TAEB (Afghanistan): I believe that if the representative of the military establishment of Pakistan openly reccgnizes that it is for the people of Afghanistan to decide their own destiny, Pakistan should stop its interference and intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

For the record and for the information of representatives here, I should like to refer to some remarks made by Sebghatullah Mujadedi, head of the so-called Interim Government of Pakistan, which was designed and created by the Inter-Service Intelligence of Pakistan in Rawalpindi last year. The representative of Pakistan has spoken so proudly of this.

Sebghatullah Mujadedi gave an interview this month in which he disclosed that attacks on Kabul City and other strategic cities of Afghanistan had recently taken place in the framework of a plan drawn up by the military authorities of Pakistan. He added that the Government of Pakistan was exerting pressure on Afghan opposition groups to participate in those criminal operations, threatening that if they did not they would have to leave the territory of Pakistan. Mujadedi also disclosed the delivery of 700 truckloads of new weapons and equipment by Pakistan to the Islamic Party of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. He expressed his concern over the increasing involvement of the Pakistani military and its intelligence service in planning, organizing and directing military operations inside Afghanistan, particularly in the operation nicknamed "Attack on Kabul".

(Mr. Taeb, Afghanistan)

These facts speak for themselves. Those who have been created by the military circles of Pakistan can no longer bring any pressure to bear. If the Pakistani Government wishes to see the people of Afghanistan living in peace and harmony, it should stop those activities against my people.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like once again to remind representatives that in accordance with the Committee's programme of work and time-table the deadline for submission of draft resolutions under disarmament agenda items 45 to 66 and 155 is Tuesday, 30 October 1990, at 6 p.m.

As the Committee will recall, at our previous meeting the Secretary of the Committee drew the Committee's attention to the text of a letter from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee which has been officially circulated as document A/C.1/45/6 of the First Committee. The letter concerns the request to the Main Committees of the General Assembly, including the First Committee, to communicate their views to the Fifth Committee on the relevant programmes of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992 to 1997.

If any members of the Committee wish to express their views on the subject-matter, they should transmit such comments to the Chairman in writing by Monday, 5 November, so that he can forward them to the Fifth Committee as requested. Otherwise, he will inform the Chairman of the Fifth Committee that the First Committee has no comments to make.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.